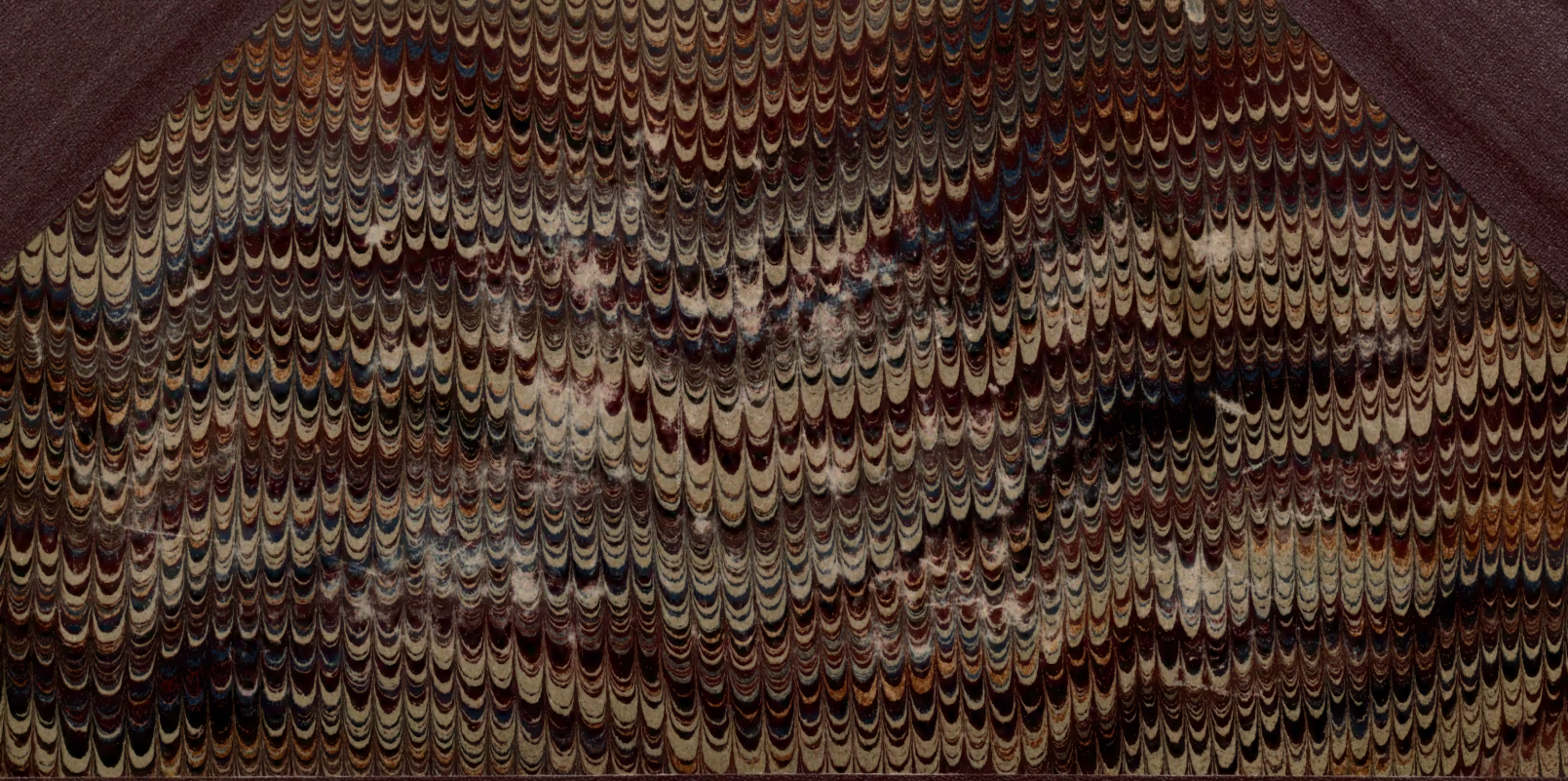

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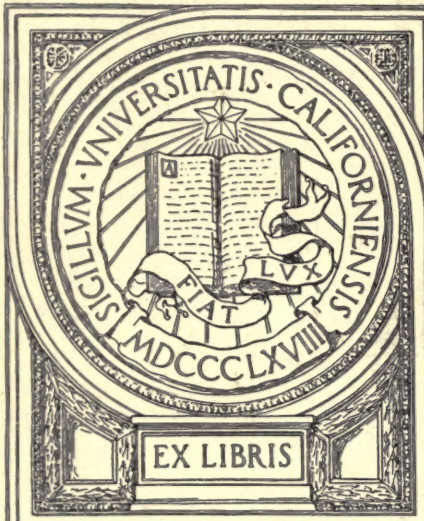

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THE

LIFE

AND

CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

RIGHT HON^BLE HENRY ADDINGTON,

FIRST VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

BY

THE HON^BLE GEORGE PELLEW, D.D.

DEAN OF NORWICH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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OF

LORD SIDMOUTH.

CHAPTER XVI.

1802.

Definitive Treaty of Peace signed March 27th. Opinions of Statesmen respecting it. Progress of the Negotiation described. Correspondence of Lord Cornwallis and Colonel Littlehales. Negotiation transferred from Paris to Amiens. Lord Cornwallis's Letter of 12th December respecting Malta. Remarks upon it. Letter from Lord Cornwallis of 27th December. Letters from M. Otto to Sir J. Macpherson; also from the Prince of Wales to Mr. Addington, and Mr. Addington's Reply. Allusion to the Negotiations by the King, February 15th. Letter from Lord Cornwallis. Satisfactory State of Negotiation. Conclusion of the Treaty — Its public Reception. Objections by Mr. Windham and others stated and answered. Malta. Variations between preliminary and definitive Treaties. Non-renewal of former Treaties. General Reflections in justification of the Treaty. Weight of eminent Authority in favour of the Peace greatly preponderative — Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan — Mr. Windham himself at a subsequent Period. Subject concluded.

On the 29th of March, 1802, Mr. Moore, assistant secretary to Marquis Cornwallis, arrived in Downing Street with the definitive treaty of peace, which had been signed at Amiens on the 27th of that month by

the plenipotentiaries of England, France, Spain, and the Batavian Republic. At length, then, the negotiation, after having extended through nearly six wearisome months, was brought to a conclusion; and as it constituted, in its various circumstances, the leading feature of Mr. Addington's administration, all the documents relating to that event have been reserved for a separate chapter, with a view of presenting them to the reader in a connected shape, and accompanied by a few observations in justification of the measure. The progress of the negotiation with M. Otto has already been traced to the signature of the preliminary treaty on the 1st of October, 1801. At that period the clamour for peace had become so universal*, and it appeared so unreasonable that two governments which had divided the earth and the waters between them in such a manner, that one could not safely set foot on the Continent, nor the other spread a sail upon the ocean, should continue a contest from which neither could derive advantage, that the news was received with the utmost enthusiasm by both nations. The following quotation, therefore, from Claudian, emanating of course from Dr. Huntingford, was at first strictly appropriate: —

> "Omnis in hoc uno variis discordia cessit
> Ordinibus; lætatur eques, plauditque senator,
> Votaque patricio certant plebeia favori."

After a time, however, that species of mental re-

* The author finds this fact stated thus in Mr. Addington's own handwriting: — "To add to these embarrassments, the continuance of the war, which for a considerable time had been a stalking-horse for the disaffected, was contemplated with weariness and repugnance by a large proportion of even the well-disposed part of the community." — *MS. Notes.*

action, which almost invariably leads those who have gained an unhoped for advantage, or received an unexpected benefit, to think afterwards, that something still better might have been obtained, began to prevail; and Lord Grenville, Mr. Windham, and the belligerent section of the late government condemned the peace, in terms of unmeasured censure, whilst Mr. Pitt and his followers, comprising the great bulk of the nation in and out of parliament, approved of it as essential to the interests of the state, and as the best of which the circumstances admitted. No account will here be given of the debates of the 3d and 4th of November on the preliminary treaty, in which the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Bedford, Lord Moira, Lord Nelson, Messrs. Pitt, Wilberforce, and many others, including Mr. Fox, though on different grounds, took part in favour of the government measure; and the whole Grenville party, in condemnation of it. This is deemed unnecessary, because the speeches then delivered will be found to constitute a portion of every historical record of that period: they are absorbed, moreover, in the superior interest of the definitive treaty; and though, undoubtedly, the speakers in both discussions entered with much ability into the minutiæ of the negotiation, yet the grand question turns, after all, not so much on matters of detail as upon general principles. Waving, therefore, all further allusion to the earlier proceedings, the author commences with letters written subsequent to the 1st of October, 1801, and of these the foremost in order of date is from Mr. Addington to his brother, by an extract from which it appears that, as early as the 4th of October, Marquis Cornwallis had been selected to proceed as ambassador

to France. "Lord Cornwallis left Wimbledon this morning. My conversation with him was satisfactory to the highest degree." The letter next in seniority, written by Dr. Goodenough, October 8th, notices the efforts which were already making to render the peace unpopular. "Great means are using to induce the public to form wrong estimations of the peace, the terms, &c., as if every thing were in our own power." * * * I reduce the subject to this, that peace was necessary, wise, and honourable. Whether I argue these things rightly I know not, but I wish to see 'one of the best men in the world,' as the King often calls you to me, beloved as he deserves."

A series of private letters now commences, addressed to Mr. Addington by Marquis Cornwallis, and his chief secretary, Colonel Littlehales, who had been temporarily withdrawn from his duties at Dublin, to occupy this important position in the embassy. The first letter, dated "Calais, November 4th," was written by Colonel Littlehales, and after announcing Lord Cornwallis's arrival on the preceding evening, after a tedious passage of fifteen hours from Dover, and his Lordship's intention of proceeding to Boulogne that day, and of reaching Paris on the seventh, it proceeds as follows: — "Every attention, respect, and civility, has been shown to Lord Cornwallis at this place: the municipality received him upon his landing on the quay, with the commandant of the garrison: he was saluted with cannon, and the streets were lined with troops. This morning the general of division, Ferrand, with his staff and other military officers, paid their compliments to his Lordship."

In the next letter, dated Paris, November 8th,

the colonel reports Lord Cornwallis's safe arrival in that city on the preceding day, after having received the most marked attention from the principal civil and military authorities in every city, or place of any consideration, through which his Lordship had passed since his landing in France. "The country," he proceeds, "between Calais and Paris seems in a high state of cultivation, and from the cursory inquiry that I have been enabled to make, there does not appear to be any scarcity of provisions in this part of France. Lord Cornwallis dined to-day with M. Talleyrand, and met Joseph Bonaparte, and many of the French and foreign ministers, and general officers. He was received with due attention. I accompanied his Lordship, and had an opportunity of holding a slight conversation with Joseph Bonaparte, whose manners appear to be amiable and engaging, and his general deportment prepossessing. Lord Cornwallis has not yet had an audience with the First Consul, but after the fête of to-morrow he expects to see him."

As Col. Littlehales's intercourse with the society of Paris improved, the interest of his letters naturally increased. The reader, therefore, will readily tolerate a longer extract from the gallant secretary's next communication, which bears the date of November 10th: —

[Private.]

"Dear Sir,

"On the 8th instant I had the honour to acquaint you of my arrival here, since which, Lord Cornwallis has had an audience with the First Consul that has been very satisfactory to him. I understand from his Lordship, that Bonaparte was not only particular in his inquiries respecting his Majesty's health, but also expressed his hope that he might continue

well, in a manner which was peculiarly grateful to Lord Cornwallis.

"Nothing could exceed the regularity and good order which prevailed during the exhibitions that took place yesterday in celebration of the peace, although the concourse of people was immense. This orderly disposition is attributable to the unremitting exertions of an energetic and vigilant police, assisted by a corps of troops, who were judiciously distributed in detachments, and patrolled the streets frequently. I went with Lord Cornwallis to the house of the minister of police, Fouché, to see the illuminations from the Pont Neuf along the Quais du Louvre et Voltaire, including the Tuilleries. It was the most splendid spectacle I had ever witnessed; and notwithstanding the mistake of the coachman in carrying us through the crowd, there was not a disrespectful word uttered, but every mark of civility manifested to Lord Cornwallis.

"About four o'clock a balloon ascended from the centre of the Seine, between the Pont Neuf and Pont Royal: the sun shone bright, and at that time Bonaparte and the second and third consuls, Cambaceres and Le Brun, appeared in one of the balconies of the Tuilleries, upon which, reiterated shouts of 'Vive Bonaparte, Vive le Premier Consul!' were given. * * * In regard to this government, there is no question that it is, if not purely military, in effect at least, as despotic and arbitrary as it can possibly be; and there are intelligent persons who think that its stability depends exclusively upon the probity, moderation, firmness, and perseverance of Bonaparte. There does not seem to be a reciprocal social confidence amongst the people; and the caution which they manifest in their ordinary intercourses indicates very strongly the doubts and apprehensions that exist in their minds; independently of which, it is obvious, that if there subsisted a mutual good understanding and harmony amongst the different classes, they would not constantly fly to the numerous theatres, but would mix together and seek society with each other, like the inhabitants of those nations which enjoy the blessings of internal peace.

"It is painful to observe the total alteration of manners of the people of Paris. The indelicacy and vulgarity of dress and conduct of the women, and the coarse and unnatural de-

portment of the men, generally speaking, are thoroughly disgusting, and induce reflections that are by no means comfortable: at the same time, it is to be hoped, as the word citizen is now scarcely ever mentioned, that gradually the better orders of the people will resume a tone and language which is more congenial than that now in ordinary use amongst them.

"I remain, dear Sir, with great esteem, your very sincere and most faithful humble servant,

"E. R. LITTLEHALES."

The real business of the negotiation, and the difficulties by which it was protracted to nearly half the duration of the peace in which it at length concluded, had now commenced in earnest; whilst, however, the ambassador corresponded with Lord Hawkesbury on the graver subjects of discussion, the Secretary, as in the following instance, occasionally enlivened his communications to Mr. Addington with topics of a lighter nature.

"Dear Sir, Paris, November 13th, 1801.

"As I have reason to think that the despatch which Lord Cornwallis transmits by this opportunity to Lord Hawkesbury for your information, and that of his Majesty's confidential servants, is of too much importance for me to venture to occupy any considerable portion of your time, I shall merely mention, that I accompanied Lord Cornwallis to dinner to-day at General Berthier's, who is le Ministre de la Guerre. I was placed at table next to General Massena, and had a great deal of conversation with him. He observed, that he supposed I was informed of his having been selected to command the expedition against England. He said that he was glad the peace had put an end to it; but that he had no doubt, with forty thousand French troops, he must have succeeded, although he had serious apprehensions, from the deplorably feeble state of their navy, of the possibility of disembarking in Great Britain half that number of men. He added, that he felt happy, when he was appointed to the command, at the

prospect of being opposed to a General 'si renommé et distingué que Lord Cornwallis;' and he concluded with remarking that the British troops were the bravest that he had ever been engaged with; that at Toulon, where he had a command, they fought most gallantly. At that time, he said, Bonaparte was under *his immediate orders*, although circumstances had now strangely changed their respective situations. It is easy to discern that Massena is extremely dissatisfied with the present state of things, and with the government in general, particularly with Bonaparte.

"Generals Moreau, Augereau, Brune, Moncey, Kellerman, and others, dined with Berthier; and I see no reason to change the opinion I lately expressed to you, that jealousy, distrust, and want of confidence prevail amongst the persons in this country generally who are now in power, and indeed amongst all descriptions of people in Paris.

"At the Theatre Français, a few nights since, Lord Brome and I were seated vis-à-vis to Bonaparte, who sent Lauriston to his Lordship to request that he would go to his box, which of course he accepted, and was received with the most marked and polite attention. I have the honour," &c. &c.

It was not without reason that Colonel Littlehales alluded to the importance of Lord Cornwallis's despatches of the same date. Those despatches described the particulars of an interview his Lordship had that day held with M. Talleyrand, in which he expressed the anxiety of the English government at receiving an intimation from M. Otto of the intended early departure of a French expedition, consisting of twenty-three sail of the line, about sixteen frigates, and 20,000 men, "to destroy, for the general interests of civilisation, that New Algiers which had established itself in the centre of America." "On se persuade," M. Otto added in his note, "que cette expédition méritera l'approbation du gouvernement Brittanique, fortement intéressé à voir rétablir l'ordre à S. Dominique; et on

désire qu'il veuille bien ordonner que de la Jamaïque on fournisse à l'armée Françoise les vivres dont cette colonie pourra se passer." The chief objection of the British government was to the large number of ships of the line employed; and Lord Cornwallis was directed to propose either that they should sail without their guns, or that the number sent should be confined to the six or eight sail at Rochefort, from whence the first detachment was to sail, in which case, as the King had an equal force at Jamaica, no alarm would be felt in our colonies, and the expense and ill feeling incident on sending out a counterpoising armament would be avoided. If, however, the French government persisted in the intention to send the whole naval force specified by M. Otto in his note, fully equipped for war, Lord Cornwallis was not to conceal from those with whom he might confer that his Majesty could not consent to such a proceeding. The answer of the French government, conveyed by M. Talleyrand in an interview with Lord Cornwallis, was very conciliatory. It utterly disclaimed any insidious or unfriendly intention; stated that only six or eight sail of the line were intended to remain in the West Indies, whilst three would proceed to America, to show the French flag in those seas; and that all the remainder would return to Europe; and offered to arm the six ships of the line which were not yet equipped, only *en flute;* but it declared the impossibility of stopping the expedition at so late a period, and distinctly declined, on the plea of a point of honour, to disarm any ships already prepared; in preference to which the First Consul would prefer to abandon the expedition altogether.

In answer to this explanation of M. Talleyrand,

Lord Hawkesbury instructed Lord Cornwallis to state, that the King would no longer object to the sailing of the expedition; but that, to calm the anxiety of his subjects in the West Indies, he should immediately add five sail of the line to the naval force he already had at Jamaica.

Colonel Littlehales's next letter, dated November 20th, contributes but little, it must be admitted, to the progress of this biography; nevertheless it would scarcely be fair to the reader to deprive him of the amusement which the Parisian gossip contained in it is calculated to afford him. The most interesting portion of the letter, however, is that which relates to the best and noblest of all Bonaparte's undertakings, — the re-establishment of the public forms of Christian worship in France — upon which he was then occupied.

"Since my last communication, I have accompanied Lord Cornwallis to dine with many of the French ministers. The strange mixture of people assembled on these occasions has been very striking. At M. Gaudin's, the Minister of Finance, the Abbé Sièyes was present; at the Minister of Marine's, Decrés, Cardinal Caprara, and the Archbishop of Corinth; and at Joseph Bonaparte's, M. de la Fayette.

"A few days ago, General Berthier was good enough to offer me a *carte générale*, framed and glazed, of the battle of Marengo; and he requested me to call upon him yesterday morning that he might give it me in person. I went accordingly; and after we had disposed of that subject, he talked very familiarly to me about America and England, and of his anxious desire to see the latter: he intimated cautiously that his present situation was no object to him, and from what he said in regard to Marengo, I am satisfied that he is no longer a personal favourite, or in the intimate confidence of Bonaparte; and I remarked further, that at one of the entertain-

ments, he was very cordial with Moreau and Massena, who, it is reported, differ politically with the First Consul.

"Whilst I was conversing at the Spanish Ambassador's with the ministers Gaudin and Chaptal, we were joined by General Berthier: Gaudin observed how extraordinary it was to see the Cardinal Caprara, and seemed to comment upon the impropriety of his being openly received in France: Chaptal replied, 'Fortunately we are not obliged to go to church.'

"I went on Sunday morning to hear high mass performed in the Church of St. Germain. It is very capacious, and I should suppose not less than 2000 persons attended, amongst whom were many military men. I afterwards walked in the Boulevards with Lord Cornwallis, and he agreed that there was some appearance of the Sabbath in the cleanliness of dress and orderly demeanour of the generality of the middling orders of the people; besides which, many shops in the principal streets were shut, and in various parts of Paris also the churches were open, and divine service performed to large congregations. * * * Lord Cornwallis has not seen the First Consul since the interview he had at his arrival, nor has his Lordship had an opportunity of presenting any person in his suite to him. The circumstance of Lord Brome's introduction to Bonaparte at the theatre was accidental, and probably suggested by Lauriston. No parade of the troops has taken place since we have been in Paris, and foreigners are generally presented to the First Consul on parade days. Lord Cornwallis went to the opera on the 17th; and when the ballet was over, he was repeatedly congratulated with loud acclamations from all parts of the house; and on Wednesday last he went to another theatre, where I was astonished to see 'Les deux Pages' acted, which has seldom, if ever, been performed, since the Revolution. It represents the character of the Great Frederic, King of Prussia, and some of the scenes portray very forcibly the excellence of monarchy. The whole was received with considerable applause.

"Bonaparte does not appear in public, except at the theatres, which he attends regularly; but he is invariably accompanied by an escort of cavalry. Some recent appointments of general officers to the Consular Guard, which are

the troops in whom he reposes most confidence (they consist of about 5000), seem to have occasioned some animadversion."

In his private letter to Mr. Addington of the 25th of November, Colonel Littlehales gives the following description of the opening of the session of the Corps Legislatif: —

"The members, in full costume, entered the Hall in procession, and elected their president for the day. A discharge of cannon then announced the Minister of the Interior, who entered in state, mounted the tribune, *read* his speech, and retired. Three counsellors of state followed him in the same form. After the president had read some trivial reports, we went away. The Hall was surrounded with troops, and sentinels with fixed bayonets were posted in the house itself. You will collect from this, how little real liberty exists in this country. In confirmation of this fact, I visited, yesterday, several courts of justice, in which I found sentries planted, in some instances close to the judges themselves. * * * I was introduced, yesterday, to Generals Bernadotte and Suchet, and saw Lucien Bonaparte at the house of his brother Joseph, and General Massena, who told me that Lucien had 'infinitely more talent and *esprit* than the rest of his brothers put together.'

"You have, no doubt, been informed of the probability that this government will send Joseph Bonaparte to London as minister, when the definitive treaty shall have been completed. He is frank, and, at times, rather communicative; but does not appear to possess brilliant talents or formidable abilities."

Lord Cornwallis had represented to Lord Hawkesbury that the treaty was retarded by the personal conferences at Paris, and suggested that they would more probably terminate satisfactorily were they to be transferred to Amiens, according to his original instructions, and conducted in a more formal manner.

Having, therefore, obtained the approbation of his government, he now announced to the French plenipotentiary an intention, to which no objection was made, to remove to Amiens on or about the 27th of November.*

The negotiations, therefore, were transferred ac-

* On the 28th of November, shortly before his departure for Amiens, Lord Cornwallis was at length admitted by the First Consul to a conference, the following particulars of which, abstracted from the fuller account which his Lordship transmitted to his government, may possibly interest the reader. The First Consul, after a few observations, said — "Vous voyez que je parle franchement," and added that he earnestly desired peace; that it was much needed by France, who had quite lost her commerce, and exhausted her pecuniary resources; that in arranging the definitive treaty he desired only to adhere to the true intent and meaning of the preliminary articles; that Lord Cornwallis would find Joseph a just and fair man. He then expressed a desire to do even more than was originally intended in favour of the Prince of Orange, because it was the personal wish of the King of Great Britain; but he gave no hope for the King of Sardinia beyond re-establishing him in Sardinia, with a pension from France. Bonaparte strongly objected to a Russian garrison in Malta, and stated the obvious evils of intrusting it to a weak power like Naples; he then suggested blowing up the fortifications. He also expressed his doubts whether any material charge could be made against him for the maintenance of prisoners, and added, that no pecuniary consideration could induce him to give up Tobago, which he considered would be dishonourable. If we wanted it because it was a British colony, he would exchange it for a French island, of which we had several, or for any territory in India; and he then pressed hard that we should allow him to negotiate with the Nabob for a few leagues of territory round Pondicherry. When Lord Cornwallis discouraged these proposals, he laughed and said, "Vous êtes bien dur." He then said, if there should be any considerable balance of money against him *he hoped to be allowed time for payment.* He then proposed that the two countries should agree to remove disaffected and dangerous persons from either country, at the request of the nation to whom they belong, and declared his willingness to send away United Irishmen.

cordingly; and on the 6th of December Colonel Littlehales wrote to Mr. Addington from Amiens, noticing the public marks of respect which Lord Cornwallis had received on his journey to and arrival at that place; and detailing the substance of several conversations which he had himself held with Joseph Bonaparte, who had informed him that it was in contemplation to send General Moreau to England, as ambassador, but that General Berthier, he believed, had solicited that post.

The state of the negotiation at this period may be gathered from the following passages taken out of a "private" letter which Lord Cornwallis himself addressed to Mr. Addington on the 12th of December, and forwarded by the hands of Colonel Littlehales:—

"The kind confidence with which you have honoured me, and the very sincere regard and respect which I entertain for your personal and political character, induce me to hazard privately some opinions of my own on the subject of Malta, which is now the most prominent feature of our negotiation.

"The alarming preponderance which France has attained in the affairs of Europe must give us reason to apprehend that whenever we are under the necessity of placing confidence in the engagements of a feeble power, that power will be induced, either by its interests or its fears, to deceive us and betray its trust.

"I do not, therefore, feel perfectly satisfied with the prospect of a Neapolitan garrison; but I confess I have great doubts whether the proposition, which accompanied Lord Hawkesbury's despatch of Dec. 6th, for our becoming a party in an attempt to revive the ancient splendour and spirit of the degraded order of Malta, which has so lately sold the very seat of its government and of its importance, will afford us any better security.

"* * * On the supposition, however, that this was effected, and that the whole order, including the French and

English knights, were assembled, could we, in the present state of things, hope that France would not possess an absolute sway in all their councils, when the Pope, the whole of Italy, Spain, and a great part of Germany, are entirely submissive to the will of the gigantic republic?

"I am perfectly aware that any proposal of so subtle an enemy should be received and examined with the utmost caution; but when we have no adequate plan of our own to bring forward, I scarcely think that the maxim of 'timeo Danaos' alone should induce us to reject precipitately the idea of destroying the fortifications, which, as an abstract question between us and France, seems to merit serious consideration.*

"The means which the French might use to induce the King of Naples or the knights to put them in possession of

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* Through the favour of Lord Aberdeen, the author has inspected the two volumes of correspondence relating to the treaty of Amiens, preserved in the State-paper Office, and is hence enabled to state that this plan, which is also suggested in an able paper respecting Malta which General Pigot forwarded to Lord Cornwallis, was frequently proposed to his Lordship by the French government. It was mentioned, both by the Chief Consul and Joseph Bonaparte, in the first interviews which Lord Cornwallis had with those personages on the 26th and 28th of November; and Joseph Bonaparte repeated the proposal on the 13th of December, in the following words:—"As the only value of Malta is the extraordinary strength of its fortifications, let us blow up the work, and there will be an end of all jealousy on the subject." In reply to the First Consul, on the 28th of November, Lord Cornwallis observed, "that probably the knights would object to take possession of the island in so defenceless a state;" and on the 5th of January, 1802, Lord Hawkesbury more fully expressed the King's objections to the proposal under the four following heads:—1. The difficulty of carrying the measure into effect; 2. the disgust which it would occasion, both to the inhabitants and to all the powers interested in the order; 3. the facility with which a strong power, from the naturally defensive position of the island, could again render it impregnable; and, 4. the impossibility of a weak power defending the island at all, were it to be assigned to it in a dismantled state.

Malta at the beginning of a war are obvious; and if they obtain it in its present state, and have time to lay in a moderate stock of provisions, it is impregnable. On the contrary, if there were to be no works left but such as would be sufficient to keep off a pirate, the French must keep a large body of troops for its defence, which it would be difficult to maintain; and in that condition the island would be a feeble as well as expensive step towards the accomplishment of any designs France may form against our Asiatic empire.

"From my conversation with Joseph Bonaparte, I have reason to believe that the French will engage, if they should re-establish their "Langues*," that they will not oppose the revival of those which England formerly possessed; and they have proposed the very plan that was pointed out by Lord Hawkesbury, although they recommend, in preference, the destruction of the fortifications.

"The choice, therefore, of every project which has hitherto presented itself to either party on this difficult question still remains with our cabinet; and it has been my wish rather to lay before you such military remarks as have occurred to me in favour of the demolition, than to lead your opinion in a point on which it is no easy task to come to a satisfactory decision. This will be delivered to you by my friend Littlehales, who has not been idle here, but has found opportunities of obtaining some information that may be interesting to you." * * *

The above judicious remarks explain the whole difficulty of the question respecting Malta, a mere speck on the map, but one in which a spark lay dormant, destined, ere long, to wrap the whole world in the flames of war. From the moment, indeed, that France had demonstrated her views against our eastern

* The knights and other members of the Order being foreigners, were divided into classes, according to their nations. These divisions, from their speaking each a separate tongue, were called Langues.

empire, this island had swollen into importance, as the key to Egypt, which was a stepping-stone to India; and since we had won it at the cost of a vigorous and expensive blockade of two years, we were at least entitled to stipulate that it should not fall back into the possession of France. No feasible plan, however, presented itself, by which this object could be effected. The proposal to render it defenceless, for reasons already stated was objectionable to this country, and was also understood to be unpalatable to Russia*; and to intrust it to the custody of the degenerate knights, or to that of the King of Naples, whose continental dominions were at the mercy of France, was equivalent to a surrender of it to Bonaparte, who might, on the breaking out of hostilities, have taken possession of it from the coasts of France or Italy, before any English succours could have even left Gibraltar. It was one of the provisions of the preliminary treaty, that "Malta should be restored to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and that, to render it completely independent both of England and France, it should be placed under the guarantee of a third power, to be agreed upon in the definitive treaty." The arrangement subsequently concluded was a species of compromise, by which, although the original engagement was outwardly adhered to, none, in truth, of the real difficulties of the question were obviated. It provided that the island should, within three months, be restored to the Order, be rendered entirely independent, enjoy per-

* This was intimated by Lord Cornwallis in his letter to Mr. Addington.

petual neutrality, and be open to the commerce of all nations; that there should thenceforth be no English or French langues, and that no subject of either of those states should be admissible into the order; that a Maltese langue should be established, the members of which should equally share the privileges of the Order with the other knights, and that from thenceforward one half at least of the civil offices of the government should be held by natives; that one half of the garrison of the island should consist of Maltese; that his Sicilian Majesty should be invited to furnish a garrison of 2000 natives of his dominions for one year, and until the Order should have raised a sufficient force for that purpose; and, lastly, that the island should be placed under the protection and guarantee of Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, Spain, and Prussia.

Thus the treaty was eventually agreed upon, in accordance with the terms of the preliminary articles, from which, as appears by a letter which Lord Cornwallis wrote to Mr. Addington on the 27th of December, there was at that moment some apprehension of departure: —

"I have transmitted to Lord Hawkesbury the *contre projet*, or, rather, an entirely new *projet* of a treaty which I received last night from Joseph Bonaparte, in order that his Majesty's government may determine, as soon as possible, on what principles the definitive treaty shall be negotiated.†

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† The following were the new or objectionable points in the "*projet d'un traité définitif*," presented by the French plenipotentiary on the 26th of December, 1801, in reply to the *projet* of

"Unless the French government had manifested a much more liberal and conciliatory disposition than we have hitherto experienced on their part, the present congress may last as long, and terminate as unfavourably, as that of Rastadt, if we depart, on either side, from the letter and spirit of the preliminary treaty.

"The proposal for keeping Tobago * * * and the insertion of the clause respecting the Prince of Orange * * * gave an opening to the introduction of new matter of every species; and of this the French government have availed themselves most completely.

"The relative situation of the two nations with regard to the East Indies, not having been noticed in the preliminaries, must be understood to remain precisely in the state in which they were before the commencement of the war; but the security of Portugal against the operation of the treaty of Madrid, and our refusal to make any cessions at Newfoundland or in the fisheries, which shall not appear just and reciprocally useful, cannot be better maintained than by a strict adherence to the preliminaries. I have ventured to give my opinion with the freedom of a friend, and have proposed the

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the British government, which had been delivered by Lord Cornwallis to M. Joseph Bonaparte on the 21st of the same month.

Extracted from Lord Cornwallis's despatch to Lord Hawkesbury, dated "Amiens, December 30th, 1801.

"First, the omission in the *projet* from the French government of the two articles inserted in the English *projet*, and always usual and necessary in such cases, by which his Catholic Majesty and the Batavian republic cede to his Majesty the island of Trinidad and the Dutch possessions in Ceylon. Secondly, a similar omission of an article which should stipulate for the integrity of the Portuguese possessions. Thirdly, the following clause in the article on the restitution of prisoners '*et ce sans répétition quelconque*,' which entirely lays aside his Majesty's just claim for payment of the sums advanced for maintaining the French prisoners; and, lastly, the substitution, in the article relative to Malta, of his Sicilian Majesty to be the guaranty of that island to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, in lieu of the Emperor of Russia, to whom no objection had been made before by the French government."

only mode which occurs to me for extricating us from the present difficulty."

An interval of above two months now occurs in the correspondence from Amiens. The proceedings therefore at that place during this long cessation of intercourse have been ascertained from the official correspondence between Marquis Cornwallis and Lord Hawkesbury preserved in the State Paper Office.

It appears from the despatches which Lord Cornwallis wrote in December, 1801, that a plenipotentiary had arrived from the Batavian republic, but that the Spanish negotiator was detained by illness at Padua, and that considerable delay was to be expected on that account. That, nevertheless, he and M. Joseph Bonaparte had resolved to proceed as between England and France, and that it was agreed, by way of a beginning, that he, on the part of Great Britain, should give in a *projet* of a definitive treaty. This was accordingly forwarded by Lord Hawkesbury on the 16th of December, and presented as soon as it reached Amiens: and the French *contre projet* was given in on the 26th of the same month. The English scheme was prepared as closely as possible in conformity with the preliminary articles, and with the stipulations respecting Malta which had been privately agreed upon by Lord Cornwallis and Joseph Bonaparte; but the French *projet* differed so entirely from all previous arrangements as almost to constitute a new plan*, and therefore naturally occasioned

* Lord Hawkesbury, in his despatch of the 1st January, 1802, observed that there were *five* points inserted in the English *projet* which were wholly omitted in the *contre projet* of the French government, and *six* points in the *contre projet* which

both uneasiness and displeasure to Lord Cornwallis and the British government. The former, in his private letter to Lord Hawkesbury of December 30th, expressed himself thus indignantly respecting the tone which the French plenipotentiary was now assuming in the negotiation: —

"In no instance is there any show of candour; and all consideration of what passed between your Lordship and M. Otto, and of the encouraging assurances which you received from him on particular points, are totally overlooked. * * * I feel it a most unpleasant circumstance, that, after I have obtained the French plenipotentiary's acquiescence on any point, I can have no confidence that it is finally settled, and that he will not recede from it in our next conversation. * * *

"I have thought it my duty to state the conduct of the French plenipotentiary, and the spirit by which that government appears actuated, in the clearest manner, that his Majesty's confidential servants may take precautions in time to prevent any serious ill consequences from the sailing of the French fleet from Brest."*

In the conference of December 31st, Joseph Bonaparte showed a readiness not to insist upon the French *contre projet;* and, indeed, manifested altogether a more conciliatory disposition; for which "sudden and favourable change," Lord Cornwallis observed that he

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were either wholly new or had been discussed and positively rejected before the signature of the preliminary treaty.

* About this period, and therefore partly, probably, in consequence of this intimation, an increased activity was visible in our dock-yards; several ships of the line were despatched to the West Indies, and others sailed to reinforce the Channel fleet at Torbay, under Admiral Cornwallis.

"could not account, unless by supposing that difficulties may have arisen elsewhere to induce the First Consul to press the conclusion of the treaty." On this occasion the French negotiator again and more formally proposed the demolition of the works at Malta; or, in lieu of that, the plan eventually adopted, that the six great powers of Europe should guarantee the independence of Malta, instead of leaving the island under the sole guaranty of Russia; and that the ports of Malta should be entirely neutral in war as in peace, so as to make it a place of universal refuge, and revive that original office of the members of the Order from which they derived their title of Knights Hospitallers. Lord Cornwallis, in transmitting these alternatives to his government, repeated his previous opinion in favour of the former; but observed, that he "considered the new plan, however eccentric, preferable to a Neapolitan garrison, which would be sure to betray us whenever the French demanded possession. There is now," he continued, "no material subject of discussion, except the article respecting prisoners; and, when all other matters shall be arranged, I think it probable that his Majesty's confidential servants would rather consent to some considerable modification, than materially retard the conclusion of the treaty."

Throughout the negotiation Lord Cornwallis retained the opinion which he has here intimated, of the inexpediency of insisting on the repayment of the advances made for the maintenance of French prisoners, and which, according to the official statement given in to Joseph Bonaparte by his Lordship, amounted, for the

whole period of the war, to 2,371,642*l.*, liable of course to the deduction of the counter-claim which might be made by the French government. Lord Cornwallis evidently regarded the satisfactory settlement of this claim by France utterly hopeless; and desired therefore to get rid of it by any honourable expedient; Lord Hawkesbury, however, still clung to it with tenacity; "not," as he himself admitted to Lord Cornwallis, "that he entertained the least hope of getting the money, but for the law, justice, and reason of the principle contended for."* That principle, he elsewhere observed†, was borne out by the usage of modern times. It had been introduced into the treaties of 1763 and 1783, and had since then been admitted by the French government in the "*arrêt* of the Directory of November 29th, 1799, and in M. Talleyrand's letter to Capt. Cotes of November 17th, 1800." His Lordship also cited Vattel ‡, to show that it constituted a recognised portion of the law of nations, and concluded by instructing Lord Cornwallis to "press for the admission of the principle, but to listen to any proposal as to an equivalent." On the 5th of January, 1802, Lord Hawkesbury noticed the claim now set up by the First Consul to consider Great Britain responsible for the maintenance of prisoners of war in France belonging to nations subsidized by her, in the same way as if they were her own subjects; and observed, that though there may be some show of justice in this as

* Despatch of January 23d, 1802.

† Despatch of January 1st, 1802.

‡ Lord Cornwallis stated that Joseph Bonaparte "scouted Vattel" when proposed as an authority.

regarded those corps which had formed part of the British army, and been at the sole disposal of his Majesty, there was none with respect to those powers which were only subsidized by his Majesty for political purposes, were themselves parties to the war, and directed their own forces." In order to pursue this question to its conclusion, it will here be added, that Lord Cornwallis, on the 10th of January, stated his conviction of "the decided and insuperable resolution of the French government never to repay the advances demanded under this head, and therefore requested *final commands*."

Besides this pecuniary claim which Lord Cornwallis justly regarded as not of sufficient moment to justify a rupture of the negotiations, his Lordship, on the 10th of January, mentioned three other vexatious causes of difficulty and delay: — 1st, the reluctance of the French to call the Dutch negotiator to the meeting; 2dly, the resistance given to the admission of the claims of the Prince of Orange in any stage of the treaty, notwithstanding the readiness Joseph Bonaparte had so often expressed in private to facilitate the assignment of an indemnity to that Prince; and, 3dly, the attempt by both the other negotiators to keep back the clause relative to the cession of Ceylon, and to make that cession dependent on the admission by us of certain claims set up by the Dutch.

The negotiations had now been protracted for more than a third of the period which had elapsed between the signing of the preliminaries and the definitive treaty in 1783, and little real progress had, as yet, been made. This ominous delay appears to have rendered Sir John Macpherson oblivious of

his recent promise to retire to his farm and be silent, since we now find him again in town and communicating with M. Otto, from whom he received the following note, which he submitted to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales: —

A M. le Chevalier Macpherson.

" Mon cher Chevalier, 11 Janvier, 1802.

" Nous étions trop entourés hier au soir, pour parler d'affaires. J'aurois dû vous dire que le récit de l'entrevue* dont vous avez été témoin, a été accueilli avec une satisfaction toute particulière. Cette coincidence d'idées et d'opinions parmi les hommes les plus marquans et les plus respectables des deux nations est du meilleur augure pour l'avenir. On connoît et on apprécie les talens de celui†, qui nous a si bien développé le vrai systême des deux pays, et de l'Europe entière. La paix, fondée sur une pareille base, n'est plus une trève de dix ans, un simple échange de tabatières, mais un pacte solemnel, garanti par tout ce que l'humanité a de plus cher. ' Tout est nouveau dans ce siècle,' nous a dit le Prince, tout sans doute, et surtout le langage que nous avons entendu, et qui ne s'effacera jamais de ma mémoire. Votre vertueuse administration partage ce sentiment, la nôtre y applaudit; le bonheur du globe est mûr. Hâtons-nous d'en cueillir les fruits. Le souffle de la jalousie et du crime pourra les flétrir. L'Europe a opposé *la fausse politique* à la *fausse philosophie.* L'expérience et la raison les ont terrassées toutes deux. Que la politique ne soit plus la science de l'envie et des chicanes: qu'elle devienne enfin l'art, non de conduire adroitement les procès diplomatiques, mais de les éviter; non de rendre les peuples *puissans* mais *heureux.* Malheureusement les deux nations renferment encore beaucoup d'élèves des anciennes écoles: et il faut un grand effort pour *leur fermer la bouche.*

" Nous causerons de tout cela, mon cher Chevalier, quand j'aurai le plaisir de vous voir. Veuillez informer en attendant,

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* At Carlton House. † The Prince of Wales.

l'illustre ami des hommes, que j'espère obtenir pour son protégé * la permission qu'il désire; et que mon plus grand bonheur, sera de lui donner quelquefois, des preuves de mon respect et de mon dévouement.

" Je vous salue cordialement, OTTO."

The impression which the above document made upon the Prince is explained in the letter subjoined:—

H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to the Right Hon. Henry Addington.

" Jan. 22d, 1802.

" When the letter of M. Otto, which I have now the pleasure to inclose to you, was communicated to me, I desired Admiral Payne to lay it before you: he called twice in Downing Street, but missed you. It is neither from the compliments that M. Otto has been pleased to pay me, nor even from the justice which he renders to your administration, that I am anxious to draw your attention to the contents of his letter. It is the wisdom, the temper, and the pleasing harmony of the political order which it embraces, that have won my admiration. Fortunate shall I reckon my own destiny in life, if I can in any way be useful to favour a political system of such extensive good. I know what you will naturally feel on the subject; and no one can wish you more success in the arduous and noble duty you are discharging for your country.

" GEORGE P."

" Sir, Downing Street, Jan. 23d, 1802.

" My warmest acknowledgments are due to your Royal Highness, for the great satisfaction afforded me by the letters which I had the honour of receiving yesterday evening from Carlton House. I have the best reasons to believe that M. Otto's account of the impression made on the French government is correct; and I am sanguine in the hope that

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* M. de Calonne.

a system may be adopted, which, by keeping clear of the extreme of distrust on the one hand, and of credulity and weakness on the other, will be suited to the temper, character, and interest of both countries. I may be permitted to add, that I feel very strongly the value and importance of the approbation with which your Royal Highness has been pleased to distinguish my humble but sincere endeavours in the public service, and of the good wishes which you have condescended to express for their success.

"With the utmost deference and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your Royal Highness's most humble and devoted servant,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

The only allusion which the King seems to have made to the peace in his correspondence with Mr. Addington, is contained in the following extract from a letter dated "Windsor, Monday, February 15th:—

"His Majesty cannot help, at the same time, mentioning his approbation of the instructions sent to the Marquis Cornwallis on Saturday, as it is high time to know what we have to depend upon. Persons will naturally have different opinions as to the effect it will have in France; but no one can differ as to the propriety and necessity of making a stand; and, should the answer be hostile, the whole conduct of England during the negotiation, when known, will show that great temper and moderation has been the line of conduct adopted, perhaps to an excess.

"GEORGE R."

These manly and judicious observations were occasioned by the unstable conduct of the French plenipotentiary, who manifested a versatility of purpose — objecting to-day to his own proposition of yesterday, — which appears utterly inconsistent with the preference for peace which the First Consul and

himself had so earnestly expressed to Lord Cornwallis: insomuch, that in negotiating with him, that honourable and upright nobleman had, as it were, to deal with two distinct persons, one of whom, in private conversation, promised every thing that was just and equitable, whilst the other, in his public capacity, objected to the very things which his "umbra" had previously suggested. Thus, for example, on the 17th of January, Lord Cornwallis was obliged to complain that Joseph Bonaparte now found great objection to the new project respecting Malta, although it had been drawn up, in almost every particular, according to his own suggestions: it appears, however, that by the 23d this cold fit had passed away, since Lord Cornwallis wrote on that day that there then remained but one subject of positive disagreement, namely, the demand of payment for prisoners. The rival negotiators still retained this conciliatory disposition on the 1st of February, on which day Lord Cornwallis announced that the Spanish plenipotentiary the Chevalier D'Ayara had arrived, and assented to the preliminary treaty by which Spain had surrendered Trinidad to us*; that the Batavian plenipotentiary had fully consented to the insertion of an article in the treaty stipulating an indemnity to the Prince of Orange, and waved the pretensions of his government to unconditional restitution of the ships of war held in the Prince's name; and that he, Lord Cornwallis,

* In his secret letter to Lord Hawkesbury of November 20th, 1801, Lord Cornwallis had stated that "the French government would find much difficulty, and be obliged to use strong measures with their allies, especially with Spain, before their acquiescence in the surrender of Trinidad and Ceylon could be obtained."

had suggested that the value of those ships should be deducted from the amount of indemnification to be paid to his Serene Highness. Only four days afterwards another unfavourable change came over the aspect of the negotiation, and in his private letter of February 5th, Lord Cornwallis informed Lord Hawkesbury, with surprise and disappointment, that the proposal of a temporary Neapolitan garrison for Malta had been totally rejected by the French plenipotentiary, who showed now, as he had previously done, that he did not feel himself bound, in the smallest degree, by what had passed at private interviews. The manner in which the above decision of the French government had been expressed in the paper delivered to Lord Cornwallis, was considered extremely offensive, and it was this which gave rise to the remarks in the King's letter to Mr. Addington of February the 15th. On the same occasion, Joseph Bonaparte strongly remonstrated with Lord Cornwallis, in the name of the First Consul, against M. Peltier's French newspaper, published in London, and said, "he well knew there were means by which that person's writings might be controlled."

In the same despatch, Lord Cornwallis mentioned that the Chevalier D'Ayara had expressed to him his regret, that his Lordship had no proposition to make to him for renewing, by an article in the definitive treaty, the former treaties with the King of Spain, to which communication, Lord Hawkesbury replied, through Lord Cornwallis, on the 12th of February, that his Majesty "would have no objection to agree to a separate convention with the King of Spain, for the renewal of former treaties."

This is the only allusion which the author has discovered in the two bulky volumes of despatches to the renewal of ancient treaties, a question afterwards so much canvassed in the British parliament. Both parties, probably, were afraid to enter upon the subject; and certainly, judging from the tone of the French government on other topics, the agitation of so fruitful a subject of discussion, might have protracted the negotiation to an interminable length. In reply to an application, transmitted at the same time from Spain, that his Majesty would acknowledge the King of Etruria, Lord Hawkesbury observed, that it was entirely out of the question, unless, on condition of the restitution of Olivenza to Portugal, and of the Presidi to Naples, or of the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia in Piedmont.

The tendency to discord by which the French plenipotentiary was influenced on the 5th of February had not evaporated by the 13th; on which day Lord Cornwallis informed his Majesty's confidential servants, that the arrangement which provided that the Batavian government should indemnify the Prince of Orange had been annulled by Joseph Bonaparte, who would, however, stipulate on the part of France for a pecuniary as well as a territorial indemnity for the Prince of Orange, but would only engage the good offices of his government for that purpose. At length, on the 16th of February, arrived the reply of the British government to the announcement of these extraordinary proceedings on the part of France. Lord Hawkesbury commenced by expressing surprise and regret at the retrograde motion of the negotiation, especially as the recent extravagant and unjusti-

fiable events at Lyons would, it might be thought, make the First Consul anxious to close his account with this country. His Lordship then proceeds, in no very measured terms, to characterise the conduct of the French government towards the Prince of Orange, and finally alludes to the breaking off of the negotiations as by no means an improbable event; he adds, however, in conclusion, that "it is of consequence that the treaty should not appear to break off on account of any impatience on our part."

Before the above despatch could reach its destination another transmutation had occurred in the conduct of the French plenipotentiary; and on the 23d of February Lord Cornwallis reported several meetings and protocols which had tended to place matters on a somewhat better footing. In the same despatch his Lordship described a strange instance of forgetfulness or misrepresentation on the part of Joseph Bonaparte, "who had thrown out to him on two occasions that the Spanish plenipotentiary had orders not to sign the treaty, unless it should contain a recognition on the part of his Majesty of the King of Tuscany." The Chevalier D'Ayara, however, distinctly told Lord Cornwallis that, "satisfactory as it would have been to his court to have obtained such a recognition, the King's refusal would be no bar to his signing the treaty, which he was ready to do that moment." The British government now felt that circumstances required them to take a decided line. Lord Hawkesbury's despatch, therefore, of March the 2d, contained the King's final decision on the four controverted points—of Malta, the prisoners, the indemnity to the Prince of Orange, and the admission of the Porte as

a party to the treaty*; and directed Lord Cornwallis to obtain, without delay, a distinct and explicit answer from M. Joseph Bonaparte to them all. The British negotiator was further intrusted with discretionary power to state, in case it should be necessary, that he was directed to leave Amiens in eight days. In this despatch Lord Hawkesbury still adhered to the claim respecting the prisoners, which Lord Cornwallis had suggested a plan for getting rid of, by appointing commissioners to settle it in a public article, and by providing in a secret one that they should not be nominated except by consent of all the contracting parties. The above decided instructions to the plenipotentiary were backed by extensive naval preparations in all the ports of England, at which Joseph Bonaparte remonstrated with Lord Cornwallis at their next conference. The assumption, however, of this determined attitude would appear to have materially influenced the French government, which now seemed as anxious to accelerate the peace as it had previously been to retard it. Under such influence difficulties vanished as easily as they had been created; and on the 10th of March Lord Cornwallis expressed his perfect confidence in Joseph Bonaparte's present disposition for peace, which he confirmed on the 13th, by reporting the entire settlement of the whole treaty with the French, Spanish, and Dutch plenipotentiaries, except as regarded the prisoners, concerning whom the ultimatum of our government had not yet arrived, and the Emperor of Russia's governing the pro-

* This topic of discussion had arisen some time before, and it occupies a considerable portion of the correspondence.

ceedings of the election of a Grand Master, to which France decidedly objected.*

It was at this period that his Lordship resumed his private correspondence with Mr. Addington, and announced to him, in the following note, the approaching termination of his anxious and protracted mission :—

"My dear Sir, Amiens, March 10th, 1802.

"You will see by my letters to Lord Hawkesbury, and especially by the copy of a note which I have just received from M. Joseph Bonaparte †, that things are going on here as well as possible, on which I very sincerely congratulate you. It will be a most gratifying reflection for me, in the decline of life, to have been the instrument in bringing the negotiation to a successful and honourable issue; and I shall feel a pride in having received so strong a mark of your confidence

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* The objections of the First Consul on this head appear to have been influenced by a wish to prevent any appearance of summary dismissal attaching to the present, or rather late, Grand Master, Baron Hompesch, by whom Malta had been surrendered to France without resistance, and whom, therefore, the First Consul felt himself bound to protect.

† "Le citoyen, Joseph Bonaparte, a reçu de Paris, les réponses qu'il pouvait désirer, sur les articles qui ont été l'objet des dernières conférences.

"Il croit la discussion tellement épuisée, que le terme de la négociation ne peut pas être éloignée : il prie donc Lord Cornwallis, de vouloir indiquer le moment, où ayant lui-même reçu les éclaircissemens qu'il attendait encore hier, sur l'article des prisonniers et autres, il sera en mesure de conclure.

"Du moment où cette époque si désirée, ne dépendra plus que des plénipotentiaires, Lord Cornwallis, partagera, sans doute, toute l'impatience du soussigné.

"Il a l'honneur de renouveller à S. E. les assurances de sa haute considération.

(Signé) "BONAPARTE.

"Amiens, le 19 Ventose, an 10."

as to have been selected for so arduous and important an undertaking. Yours, &c. &c.

"CORNWALLIS."

At length, on the 25th of March, and in the fifth month of his embassy, Lord Cornwallis announced to his government, in the subjoined letter to Lord Hawkesbury, that "at a conference held the preceding night, which lasted from 10 P. M. till 3 A. M., peace was happily concluded." On the 27th his Lordship despatched the treaty to London as soon as it was signed, intending to follow it himself in two or three days, and on the 28th he privately informed Lord Hawkesbury that even at the last moment the claims of the Prince of Orange had well nigh proved fatal to the negotiation, in consequence of the declaration which had previously been made by France, that she alone would provide the compensation in question. The Batavian plenipotentiary, therefore, M. Schimmelpenninck, for a long time absolutely declined to sign the treaty, and he only did it at last after a secret article had been added, in which France renewed that engagement in a more solemn manner.*

"My Lord, Amiens, March 25th, 1802.

"The messenger Hunter delivered to me, yesterday morning, your Lordship's confidential despatch of the 22d instant.

* This article, though termed by Lord Cornwallis "secret," was promulgated with the treaty, and was generally considered, both in and out of parliament, a ruse practised by the French and Dutch plenipotentiaries, of which the English negotiator was not cognisant. It is evident, however, from Lord Cornwallis's letter of the 28th of March, that this was not the case, and that the expedient was resorted to, without being objected to by his Lordship, to evade a difficulty which must otherwise have prevented the execution of the treaty.

I lost no time in communicating to M. Joseph Bonaparte, through the channel of the Batavian plenipotentiary, the modifications in which his Majesty's government have thought proper to acquiesce, of the *projet* of a definitive treaty lately under discussion. I was sorry to find that they were not altogether sufficient to procure a termination of the negotiation precisely in the terms transmitted to me by your Lordship. The propositions, however, which were communicated to me by M. Schimmelpenninck, from the French plenipotentiary, having approached so near to those prescribed by your instructions as to give me hopes that the great work of peace might still be accomplished in terms admissible by his Majesty, I agreed to an interview with M. Bonaparte last night, at which the Batavian minister assisted.

Our discussions began at 10 o'clock, and I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that they terminated happily at 3 this morning, by the signature of a declaration, of which I enclose a copy; and by which you will perceive that peace is made, each party being bound to sign the treaty (as soon as the several copies can be prepared), verbatim et literatim, according to the draft to which the declaration is annexed.

(Signed) "CORNWALLIS.

"To the Right Honourable Lord Hawkesbury."

[Copy.]

"Nous, soussignés plénipotentiaires de sa Majesté Britannique et de la République Française, déclarons avoir définitivement arrêté cette minute du traité définitif de paix, promettant de signer de suite les exemplaires qui en seront faits incessament, en langue Angloise et Française, conformément à la dite minute.

(Signed) "CORNWALLIS. BONAPARTE.

"Fait à Amiens, le 25 Mars, 1802 (4 Germinal, an 10)."

The treaty of peace, in its complete and definitive state, was received in England by the moderate, which happily on this occasion comprised the largest portion of the community, with a settled and deliberate approba-

tion. Looking to the principles upon which the war had been undertaken—those, namely, of conservation, not of aggrandisement—reasonable men did not consider the retention of conquests which we had not desired, and for which we had no real occasion, a sufficient ground for the prolongation of the contest; on the contrary, they argued, that since, as regarded the means of inflicting further injury or annoyance on France, our fuel was now burnt out, it would be an offence against humanity, and a waste of blood and treasure, to protract, without allies or any attainable object, a contest which we had the opportunity to conclude on reasonable terms. Such was the tone of reflection which predominated throughout the nation during the interval between the communication of the treaty to both Houses of parliament on the 29th of March, and the consideration of the terms in those assemblies on the 13th and 14th of May. As it was unusual for parliament, after approving the preliminary articles of a peace, to discuss again at length the definitive treaty, the government did not originate any motion on this question, but at the same time expressed a perfect readiness to enter into a defence of their proceedings should it be desired. In deference, therefore, to the small but able and respected section of Mr. Pitt's late adherents who disapproved of the treaty, the 13th of May was set apart by both Houses for the consideration of the subject. On those occasions the various specific objections to the treaty were fully detailed and canvassed; and these now appear so very insignificant, after an interval of above forty years, that it is difficult to conceive how such great and good men as Lord Grenville, Mr. Windham, and their

associates, could have thought it justifiable, on such slender grounds, to prolong the evils of war. In justice both to Mr. Addington and to his opponents, these objections, and the answers to them, will here be briefly enumerated. The former are extracted from the speech with which Mr. Windham, the chief objector to the treaty, commenced the attack upon it on the 3d of May. The grounds upon which he purposed to establish the necessity of further inquiry, might be divided, he observed, into four distinct heads. The first referred to those points which, though existing at the time of signing the preliminaries, were nevertheless unknown to the House; and under this branch he included the surrender to France of the island of Elba, the establishment of a boundary in Guiana, favourable to France and injurious to Portugal, and the cession of Louisiana. Mr. Addington answered these objections by stating that Elba had been ceded to France, not by England, but by its lawful sovereign, the King of Etruria, who was perfectly competent to make this surrender of his own territory. Why, then, should *we* insist that it should not be given up, and go to war if our desire was not complied with? That the limits of French Guiana had been regulated by the treaty of Badajos, and were precisely those which the Portuguese had declared they should think themselves happy in obtaining. Ministers had stipulated for the integrity of the Queen of Portugal's dominions, and their conduct towards her had been just and liberal; but the exception relative to the limits in South America had been conceded by a separate treaty to which Great Britain was not a party; ministers, however, had obtained an advan-

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tageous definition of those limits: that, lastly, with respect to the cession of Louisiana by Spain, there was no fear that its possession would give France a dangerous influence in the councils of the North American States. When Louisiana was formerly in the hands of France it was totally powerless; when belonging to Spain, its strength had not increased. Mr. Windham's second class of objections resulted out of the political changes which occurred in the interval between the preliminary and the definitive treaties. Of these, the establishment of the Italian republic with Bonaparte at its head was the *first*, and the sailing of the French armament to the West Indies was the *second*. In reply to the former of these complaints, Mr. Addington readily admitted that the annexation of the power of the Cisalpine republic to that of France was calculated to excite solicitude and anxiety. But the real question was, whether this event, striking as it was, would have justified the government in breaking off the pending negotiations for the definitive treaty. We could not, however disposed, have successfully resisted the measure without the co-operation of the continental powers; but the fact was, that before intelligence of the event could reach this country, it had already received the sanction of Austria, Russia, and Prussia; under such circumstances the renewal of the contest would have been highly imprudent. The second ground of accusation, the permitting the French armament to sail for St. Domingo, did not, when soberly considered, require any defence at all; so obvious would have been both the injustice and impolicy of our attempting to prevent France from reducing her own

revolted colonies to obedience. Such a proceeding would only have been justifiable in a time of war, and had it succeeded, we should thereby only have rendered our great rival less assailable in future contests, and established a dangerous precedent of successful rebellion, and an alluring example of a negro republic in the centre of our own colonies.

Under his third general head, relating to points in which he considered that the two treaties differed, Mr. Windham included the several articles respecting prisoners of war, the island of Malta, and the Cape of Good Hope. On the first point, he objected to the pecuniary advances made by the French government for the maintenance of Russian prisoners of war in that country being set off against the sums due to England for the support of Frenchmen taken prisoners by us; but to this Mr. Addington replied, that as the Russian troops had not merely been our allies and in our pay, but also wholly under our direction and control, there was no legal or reasonable ground for objecting to their being placed, when prisoners of war, on the same footing as our own troops.* On the subject of Malta—the grand difficulty throughout all the negotiations—as Mr. Windham's objections were more numerous and important, so the answers necessarily partook of the same character. The present arrangement, he contended, must inevitably consign that important island to the dominion of France. The Order had now no foreign revenues wherewith to maintain an army, and those of the

* Lord Hawkesbury admitted this principle when writing to Lord Cornwallis on the 5th of January, 1802.

island were totally inadequate to such a purpose. As regarded Naples, a Neapolitan and a French garrison he considered equivalent terms. Through the influence which Bonaparte must exercise over the court of Naples as head of the Italian republic, England would be completely ousted from Malta, and France put in possession. He objected also to the undefined manner in which the intended neutrality of the Order was proclaimed. If it was meant that only a limited number of ships of war of each nation should be admitted at the same time into the ports, then the disadvantage would be great on the part of England, because she had no maritime power in alliance with her, whereas France numbered both Spain and Holland amongst her friends. This last objection was really too trivial to require serious refutation; but to the preceding ones, in which Lord Grenville, and even Mr. Dundas, though voting with the government, took part, Mr. Addington and his friends replied by admitting the difficulty of the question, but contending that as England had voluntarily excluded herself from keeping possession of the island by her own declaration, when she first established the blockade, there remained no other course so free from objections as that which had been adopted. They asserted that the possessors of Sicily must be deeply interested in keeping the French out of Malta; that the proposed arrangement was highly satisfactory to the Maltese; that the revenues of the island were capable of much improvement, and would soon be equal to its defence; and, finally, that the independence of the Order was placed under the guarantee of the six leading powers of Europe.

As regarded the Cape, the only real difference between the preliminary and definitive arrangements was this, that by the latter the colony was opened to the commerce of Spain as well as to that of the other contracting powers.* To this no one would object; the real ground of complaint must therefore have been, that it was not retained: but when it is considered that we had already dispossessed Holland of the far more important possession of Ceylon, and that another of the complaints against the treaty was its pressing so heavily upon our original allies, the Dutch, this can only be regarded as one of those thoughtless outcries at the non-fulfilment of impossibilities into which the wisest men are occasionally betrayed.

Mr. Windham's fourth subject of lamentation consisted of points which occurred in the definitive, but formed no part of the preliminary, treaty. There were two things of which he particularly complained under this head — the omission in the terms of any stipulation for the renewal of ancient treaties, and the abandonment of the claims of the house of Orange. As regarded the former question, it was matter of great doubt amongst those who were best informed on the subject, whether or not it was a desirable object to renew all the obsolete treaties which, from time immemorial, it had been customary to cancel by every declaration of war, and to revive in every treaty of peace.† Lord Ellenborough treated the objection

* This was strongly objected to, Lord Cornwallis observed, by the Batavian plenipotentiary, and insisted on by those of France and Spain.

† "Pray, my dear Sir," wrote Lord Eldon to Mr. Addington, "let Lord Hawkesbury prepare a brief for your colleagues in the

very lightly, as militating against every rule of reason and common sense, and Mr. Addington denied that the subject had been overlooked; and assured the House that it was not until after mature deliberation that the government, under the present circumstances

House of Lords on the subject of the non-renewal of the treaties, for I protest I do not think any of us know what we are to say on that subject." There is also a very able and elaborate letter of six folio sheets, dated 19th of April, 1802, from Mr. Dundas to Mr. Addington, in which, with reference to India, he expresses his serious regret and apprehensions at the non-renewal of the treaty with France of 1787, regulating the interests of the two nations, and correcting the errors of the preceding treaty of 1783: the treaty of 1787 being, it appears, a measure, and a favourite one, of his own. On the back of this letter there is the following memorandum in Mr. Addington's handwriting: — "The sentiments expressed in this letter were very much changed upon reflection, as it appeared from Mr. Dundas's very able speech in the House of Commons on Wednesday, the 12th of May." In that speech Mr. Dundas, in answer to Dr. Lawrence, who had brought the question of the non-renewal of treaties relating to India directly before the House, observed, that "our right to the sovereignty of India against all European powers was indisputable, being that of conquest. We may say freely to them all, 'We have gained this country by our arms.' We possess it *de facto*. That he mistook greatly if Great Britain did not stand at that moment upon a better footing, as regarded her sovereignty in India, than if the former treaties had been renewed by it: that the treaty of 1783 contained very objectionable clauses, which were obviated by that of 1787, but that it would have been impossible to have renewed one of them without the other: that all the treaties must have been separately discussed before they could be renewed, which would have protracted the negotiations *ad infinitum*, and, consequently, that he was fully convinced, on considering our affairs in relation to those of France, that it was infinitely better for us to pass the subject over in silence, than to have endeavoured to renew any of the former treaties." This testimony of one who did not in all respects approve of the definitive treaty is valuable to Mr. Addington, and proves that the omission of allusion to ancient treaties was the result of wise and deliberate intention.

of Europe, had resolved to make no proposition respecting the renewal of these treaties: there were strong reasons of a commercial nature which rendered such a step inexpedient. In answer to the charge of having neglected the interests of the House of Orange, by not insisting more peremptorily on their receiving an indemnity for the hereditary property taken from them during the revolution in Holland, the King's servants were obliged, by official etiquette, to restrict themselves to a general denial. Lord Cornwallis's correspondence, however, shows that they actually incurred the risk of interrupting the tenour of the negotiation, in their anxiety to procure better terms for that unfortunate family, which afterwards gratefully acknowledged the exertions thus made in its behalf; and although the stipulation, from not being binding upon Holland itself as regarded its fulfilment, was not in its *specific* character so satisfactory as could be wished, yet, as Lord Cornwallis observed in the debate, it "stood guaranteed generally upon a security as strong as possibly could be founded on the faith of a solemn treaty between the four contracting nations." *

The reader has now before him the whole amount of objections which the great men who opposed the peace were enabled, with all their ingenuity, to discover. A volume of objections might be raised against any and every treaty of peace; but on looking back, at this distance of time, upon those which were levelled against the peace of Amiens, it is impossible

* Bishop Huntingford's Brief Memoirs of Mr. Addington's Administration. Adolphus's History of England, vol. vii. page 584. Parliamentary Debates, vol. lxiii.

not to wonder at the unreasonableness of some, and the absence of real importance in most of the others. Many of them, indeed, either admitted of instant refutation or were capable of satisfactory explanation; and to the remainder, the following remark of Lord Hawkesbury was strictly applicable: "I will not say that the arrangement is as good as could have been conceived, but it is as good as circumstances would permit." *

In surveying, from the altitude of 1846, the results of the measures specially objected to in this discussion, it is curious to observe how greatly, in most instances, they differed from the apprehensions expressed. Thus Elba eventually became the place of Bonaparte's banishment: so insignificant was the question respecting Guiana, that nothing more was ever heard on the subject: Louisiana, through which France, it was said, would obtain a predominating influence in the United States, was, within a year, sold by the former to the latter power for thirty millions of dollars: the dreaded armament which France sent to the West Indies, so far from endangering *our* possessions, could not even subdue her *own:* Malta, in consequence of its becoming the object of the subsequent war,

* Even the most unpalatable portion of this arrangement — the surrender, without compensation, of so many of our conquests — was satisfactorily defended by Lord Castlereagh in the following passage: — "If I were to inquire on what principle we should act in order to re-establish our influence on the Continent, I should say, Give France the means of acquiring maritime resources and colonial advantages. This principle contains nothing in it contrary to the real interests of this country. From the moment France has acquired colonial and maritime resources, she will have more reason to apprehend the recurrence of hostilities, and will from that moment have more just and serious causes to refrain from war."

instead of falling into the possession of France, has never to this moment passed from ours: the Cape did *not* prove injurious to us whilst in the hands of its former masters, was easily recaptured, and has ever since continued a dependency of the British empire: the early resumption of hostilities rendered it impossible to ascertain whether the non-renewal of ancient treaties was politic or otherwise; and the House of Orange was at length restored to its rights and honours, through the arms, the treasures, and, above all, the perseverance of England. Here then was a verification of one of Mr. Addington's favourite maxims — "Never venture to foretell." At the conclusion of these discussions, both Houses of Parliament manifested their approbation of the definitive treaty by immense majorities*; and their decision was received with universal satisfaction by the people at large. The nation was as nearly unanimous as possible in deciding, that "as the British empire, now left alone, had no object for which to contend with any prospect of success, the protracting of war would be but to waste treasure, to shed blood, and to exhaust strength, for no useful purpose whatever." †

* In the House of Lords the minority amounted but to 16: the Commons divided, 276 for, 20 against!!!

Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham appear to have founded their unfavourable conclusions respecting the terms of the peace chiefly upon an article in the Mercure de France, a paper published under the immediate patronage of the French government, laying claim, on the part of France, to all the advantages of the treaty. It was, however, so obviously the policy of the First Consul to persuade the public of his ability as a negotiator, that assertions to that effect in a government journal are entitled to no weight whatever.

† Bishop Huntingford's notes.

And here, on a question of such importance as this grand pause in the war of the revolution, the author himself may be indulged in a few justificatory observations; and these will be founded on the general merits of the treaty.

Mr. Addington, on assuming the government, in the ninth year of the war, found Great Britain most reluctantly continuing the struggle against France, after having been forsaken by all her former allies. Her resources indeed were by no means exhausted; but the circumstances of the war were such as to forbid every reasonable expectation that the objects for which it had been undertaken would be further accomplished. Without reference, therefore, to the old and impregnable position, "pax potior bello," he could have no hesitation in deciding, that on every consideration, religious, moral, or political, peace, if attainable, was unquestionably desirable. But all doubts on this latter subject had recently been removed by the arrival of overtures from the French government: the only remaining question, therefore, was — the terms; and these naturally depended on the relative positions of the two belligerent powers, of which one was universally predominant by sea, and the other by land. From the commencement of the war the operations of England had been usually successful, and those of her allies disastrous; and the consequence of this was, that whilst we had wrested numerous colonies from France and her allies, the enemy possessed nothing belonging to England whereof to make restitution. What, then, was to become of these conquests, which our government had purchased at such a vast expense of men and treasure — instead

of concentrating the strength of the country, and combining with the continental powers in some grand undertaking which might have altered the political aspect of Europe? Mr. Addington's opponents would have answered:—"Retain your conquests, or demand some equivalent for them." But it must be remembered that there are *two* parties to a treaty; and the Chief Consul, though, apparently, at that time not indisposed to peace, was resolute neither to give compensation, nor to resign any thing which had belonged to France. Under these circumstances it became Mr. Addington's duty accurately to weigh the value of our acquisitions during the war against the cost, risk, and prospects of a protracted contest. France, driven from the ocean, bereft of almost every colony, was strictly confined to the Continent, where, however, she possessed sufficient power or influence to close every port against our commerce, from the Adriatic to the Baltic. What more, then, could be done against an enemy who no longer presented any salient point for attack, and whom we had already deprived of ships, and colonies, and commerce? But whilst *we* had thus done our worst, France retained many modes of injuring or annoying us. Not only could she lock the Continent against us, but by simply quartering her armies, even reduced to the peace establishment, upon the coasts of the Channel, she could, almost without expense to herself, compel us at her pleasure to continue all the expensive preparations which we had made in expectation of an invasion. England was then paying about one and a half millions per week* for the support of the war.

* Mr. Fox stated in the debate on the 3d of November, 1801,

Were, then, the captured colonies of sufficient value and importance to justify such an expenditure? Their retention was a heavy burden upon our finances; they were the grave of our troops; and their productions we did not require.* We had both purchased and retained them at much too high a cost; and to relinquish them, therefore, would have been no real sacrifice: it had been better, possibly, to do this under a certainty of being compelled afterwards to retake them, than not by restoring her colonies, to tempt France again upon the ocean, and thus restore also her liability to be attacked.

In deliberating, moreover, on this problem — war *with* our conquests, or peace *without* them — Mr.

that the pause in the negotiation occasioned by the rejection of Bonaparte's first overture, in December, 1800, had cost England seventy-three millions of debt.

* The following letter from Lord Glenbervie to Mr. Addington, dated Pay Office, December 3d, 1802, strongly confirms the correctness of this assertion: — "I enclose two accounts just received from the Inspector General, giving a comparative view of the sugars (exclusive of East India sugars) imported in the two years ending 5th January, 1801 and 1802. It appears by these, that in the year ending 5th of January, 1801, the imports from the conquered and now ceded settlements which we then possessed were only 410,638 cwt.; that in the year ending 5th January, 1802, the total imports of sugar greatly exceeded, and the total exports fell very short of those of the preceding year; but that in both years the quantity retained in this country exceeded the 2,000,000 cwt. supposed to be the amount of its yearly consumption. * * * The general result seems to me to be, that unless some great increase of the consumption of sugar at home or on the Continent shall take place, by the operation of some cause or measure more than temporary, a progressive accumulation, and consequent depreciation, of the article must take place, and that this must occasion in the end a great diminution of the cultivation of sugar both in the East and West Indies."

Addington may have considered that some outlets of that description were essential to the existing state of France, to give vent to the wild spirit and marvellous enterprise of her population, which could never long endure a state of perfect repose; and when to these deductions from the value of the captured colonies he added the superior facilities which France possessed for carrying on the war, not only in the instances already mentioned, but above all, in the disturbed state of Ireland, we cannot wonder that he should have resolved to negotiate upon the principle of peace on any terms consistent with the honour and security of the empire. England had not commenced the contest for purposes of aggrandisement: throughout its course she had constantly disclaimed such views; and she might, therefore, with entire consistency, resign her conquests at its close.

But the peace of Amiens may be defended from higher ground than has hitherto been occupied; and Mr. Addington might have proved, if the turn which the discussion took had permitted him to dilate upon the advantages of the treaty, that, notwithstanding the objections which were so loudly insisted on, it was after all highly advantageous to the nation.

By the careful omission of all allusion to India, it secured our vast empire in that country from every pretence for interference on the part of France.*

In Ireland also it afforded leisure and opportunity to consolidate the as yet but nominal union with that

* By this exclusion, France, as regarded India, returned to the "status ante bellum," and her few factories, which were without territory or defences, were restored to her.

kingdom, in a manner which a peace alone could have rendered possible.

The two acquisitions also which we retained were selected with a judicious consideration of their respective advantages. Ceylon was important for its productions, resources, and insular position, and still more for its peculiar situation as the key to India, and a barrier against the hostile aggression of European powers.

From Ceylon every part of India is accessible to our commerce; thither we might securely retire, if unfortunately expelled from the continent; and from thence we might still participate in the power and riches of the East.

An equally discriminative judgment was displayed in the selection of Trinidad, the situation of which at the point of contact between the West Indies and North and South America specially pointed it out as an emporium for the commerce of those regions.

In retaining these two places, Mr. Addington fully carried out the spirit of Mr. Pitt's letter of October 8th, 1800*, wherein he suggested "our retaining such of our acquisitions as were essential, not for their own intrinsic value, but for the security of our ancient possessions in the East and West." These dependencies Great Britain still possesses: they fully answer the purpose which Mr. Pitt proposed; and they possess, moreover, especially Ceylon, an intrinsic value which is yearly increasing. Such, then, were some of the advantages which resulted from this peace, although it certainly did not realise the extravagant

* Vol. I. page 263.

terms settled in Mr. Pitt's cabinet in 1800, by "insisting on the possession of the Cape, Ceylon, and Cochin, as the *sine quâ non* condition of any treaty of peace," or by refusing to permit "any condition inconsistent with it, to be even made matter of negotiation !!!" *

Supposing the merits of the treaty to be decided by the weight of authority, the number of eminent statesmen who approved of it, either as good in itself or expedient under the circumstances, greatly preponderated. Of these, the first in importance was Mr. Pitt, who, though he took no part in the great debate of the 13th and 14th of May, 1802, had spoken strongly in favour of the preliminaries, and was fully understood to have been consulted upon the most material points of the definitive treaty.

That Mr. Pitt, if in office, would himself have consented to the terms of the peace of Amiens, notwithstanding they fell short of the conditions required by the plan prepared in his cabinet, is proved by his conversation with Lord Malmesbury, on the 27th of November, 1802, in which he admitted that "the *projet* at Lisle was *not an ultimatum;* that *rather than break off that treaty we should have given way either on the Cape or Ceylon;* and that had the negotiation proceeded, Lord Grenville must have gone out." † He had previously, on the 8th of April, in that year, admitted to the same nobleman, that although he was now convinced "that no compact or covenant made with Bonaparte could be secure, still he did not regret having spoken in favour of the peace: it was

* Vol. I. p. 257.

† Lord Malmesbury's Diary, vol. iv. p. 128.

become a *necessary* measure; and rest for England, however short, was desirable."* To this may be added the evidence of his own niece, Lady Hester Stanhope, who is stated to have heard him say:—"Whenever I can make peace, whether with a consul or with whomsoever it is at the head of the French government, provided I can have any dependence in him, I will do it." No doubt, then, can be entertained that Mr. Pitt may justly be classed amongst the promoters of this peace. The qualified support which, in accordance with their declared principles, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and the Whig party generally, afforded to Mr. Addington on this occasion has already been noticed. Mr. Grey stated in parliament, that "he was convinced, on the whole, the Crown had been well advised to put an end to the contest, even on these terms, rather than continue the war;" and Mr. Erskine, it will be remembered, expressed himself in terms of strong approbation in his letter to Mr. Bond of December the 28th. The last great authority who remains to be cited, as having subsequently declared himself an approver of the peace, is *Mr. Windham himself.* The conversational anecdote upon which this assertion rests is highly creditable to the frank and manly character of that statesman, and will be related as nearly as possible in the words in which the author and others have often received it from the lips of Lord Sidmouth:—"In the month of July, 1809, Mr. Windham dined with me at Richmond Park, when only Dr. Beeke and Mr. Golding, besides ourselves, were present. After dinner Windham said to me,—'Lord Sidmouth, I have for some

* Diary, vol. iv. p. 65.

time wished to tell you, that I am thoroughly convinced, if it had not been for the peace of Amiens this country could never have maintained the struggle to the present period.' Upon this Dr. Beeke observed to him,—'That is an important admission: am I at liberty to report it to my friends, or must I regard it as confidential?' On which Windham replied,—'Not at all: it is my deliberate opinion, and I wish it to be known.'"

That this generous avowal on the part of Mr. Windham might not rest on the sole authority of Lord Sidmouth, application has been made to Thomas Amyot, Esq., the present depositary of Mr. Windham's papers, who has kindly extracted from the diary of that statesman the following entry, under the date of

"*Thursday, July 27th,* 1809. Set off a little after 3 for Richmond Park in carriage. Afraid to trust to weather. Nobody with Lord Sidmouth but Mr. Golding and Dr. Beeke. Second daughter of Lord Sidmouth at table. Much pleasant and interesting conversation. * * * Did not come away till near 10 o'clock."

The author also has before him Mr. Windham's original letter, dated "Beaconsfield, July 20th, 1809," in which he accepts Lord Sidmouth's invitation, and proposes "to go down on Thursday in the next week, though he fears it will not be possible for him to take the whole benefit of his Lordship's offer by staying all night."

It must be regarded, then, as a fact, that further reflection and subsequent events occasioned a modification of Mr. Windham's original opinions respecting

the impolicy of the peace of Amiens, which he had the manliness and integrity to avow; and that at this dinner at Richmond Park he sought and obtained absolution from Lord Sidmouth for the opposition he had formerly offered upon that important question.

On the whole, it seldom happens that any great political proceeding is received with such universal acquiescence by statesmen, parliament, and people, as was the peace of Amiens. To the Minister himself it must have been truly gratifying to find this general concurrence of opinion in favour of the leading measure of his administration. Fortunately his own arguments in justification of it can be here presented in a concise form; for amongst the Sidmouth papers has been found the MS. of an unpublished political treatise written in the year 1807, in reply to some attacks on the Addington administration, to which Lord Sidmouth afterwards added, with his own hand, certain explanatory remarks. These notes contain several passages which are considered of importance to this biography, amongst which is the following summary of his Lordship's reasons for having effected the peace of Amiens: —

"1st. Many persons in this country were advocates for peace at that time from an idea that the French government were really desirous of it; and as the First Consul had not then manifested the magnitude of his ambitious designs, and his rancorous hatred against this country, they were willing to believe that he would be found moderate and equitable (such being the best policy for him), and would regulate himself accordingly. 2dly. A strong prejudice existed amongst all the nations of Europe, as if we were the

only obstacle to peace, and, for our selfish advantage, carried on the war from which they were all suffering so much. It was most desirable, therefore, that we should show the falsehood of such opinions, and undeceive those who maintained them, whether at home or abroad. Lastly. The finances of the country — the income tax mortgaged for eleven years after peace should be concluded, and part of its produce applied to the payment of interest — were in a state which rendered any respite, however short, extremely desirable, if it could be obtained without compromising the safety and honour of the country."*

* From Lord Sidmouth's notes to a MS. political treatise, upon the first sheet of which he has written the following memorandum in pencil: — "This was drawn up by my friend the Rev. Thomas Le Mesurier; but for reasons which, I trust, will be obvious to those who know me, I have prevailed upon him not to publish it. I wish, however, that it should be preserved, and accordingly I have revised and corrected it.

"S."

It is scarcely necessary to remark here that, under these circumstances, all the revisions and corrections in Lord Sidmouth's own handwriting which occur in the MS. are entitled to be regarded as comprising his testimony and deliberate opinions.

CHAPTER XVII.

1802.

Discontinuance of the Income Tax. Lord Bexley's Statement of Mr. Addington's Financial Arrangements. Reductions of the Forces, &c. &c. Improved System of Lottery. Mr. Canning's Motion respecting Slave Trade in Trinidad. Financial Statements of Mr. Addington and Mr. Tierney. Prorogation and Dissolution of Parliament. Mr. Addington Governor of the Charter House, and his Son Clerk of the Pells. Séjour at Eastbourne. Mr. Dundas's Peerage. Letters from Mr. Pitt, Lord Wellesley, &c. &c. First Residence at the White Lodge, Richmond Park. Treason of Colonel Despard. Offer of a Bribe of 2000*l. to Mr. Addington. Pecuniary Assistance to the House of Orange. Ireland. Letters from Lord Redesdale and Dr. Black. Meeting of the second Imperial Parliament. Debate on King's Speech. Mr. Addington's Speech, December* 10*th, and Budget. Commission for Naval Inquiry. Friendly Support from Mr. Sheridan. Secession of Mr. Pitt. Correspondence with the latter. Difficulties of Minister at Close of the Year.*

ON the conclusion of the definitive treaty, Mr. Addington immediately exerted himself to reduce the war establishment, and diminish the taxation. In the fulfilment, however, of these important duties, it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution. He had a difficult political problem to solve; namely, to what extent he might relax the sinews of war, and yet retain in his own power the means of resuming hostilities at the shortest notice. Hence it was im-

possible for him to come to any decision on the two important points above mentioned, without exposing himself to censure, either for relying too confidently on the continuance of peace, or for anticipating prematurely the return of hostilities. In this conjuncture the system which he pursued was probably the correct one, since it drew upon him the animadversions of both extreme parties. He was painfully aware that a prolonged state of repose was not to be expected; for the First Consul had shown, even during the negotiations, that France, though extended to the Rhine, was not yet sufficiently capacious to satisfy his ambition. Notwithstanding, however, these ominous appearances, Mr. Addington ventured, when opening the budget, on the 5th of April, to declare his intention of immediately repealing the income tax, which ought, he considered, to be reserved as a resource in the event of war. To effect this object, he made a proposition, which was readily agreed to, for raising four additional millions per annum through the medium of new taxes*; and this he followed up by bringing forward, on subsequent occasions in the course of the year, his various financial arrangements for the peace establishment, which will now be communicated to the reader in a summary most obligingly supplied for the purpose by Lord Bexley, who occupied the responsible post of Secretary to the Treasury during Mr. Addington's administration: —

* One of the means resorted to on this occasion was a tax on malt, hops, and beer, which, in the debate of the 13th of April, Mr. Whitbread strongly resisted, and Mr. Addington enforced in an able and elaborate reply, which so entirely convinced the House, that only twelve members divided with Mr. Whitbread.

"Of the difficulties which surrounded Mr. Addington's government, the state of the finances was amongst the most considerable. During the protracted negotiation which preceded the conclusion of the definitive treaty, it had become necessary to make provision for the public service, on the full scale of the war expenditure, for five months of the year 1802. The number of seamen voted for this period amounted to 130,000, and it was afterwards continued for the remainder of the year at 70,000. Mr. Addington lost no time, after the conclusion of the peace, in proposing his financial arrangements, which had been the subject of anxious consideration during the preceding autumn. The character of the French government rendered it indispensably necessary, notwithstanding hostilities had ceased, to be prepared for some sudden aggression. The charges to be provided for were therefore very different from those of any former peace establishment; whilst the feelings of the people, which had borne up under every burden during the excitement of the war, could not be expected to submit to an undiminished pressure, after the return of peace. The removal of the income tax especially, as being peculiarly a war tax, was generally and anxiously looked for. This, however, under the then existing state of things, could not regularly have taken place in less than ten years; the income tax being charged with a debt of *fifty-six millions and a half, three per cent. stock*, which was to be repaid, with interest, from its produce after the conclusion of the war. This debt had arisen from the disappointment of Mr. Pitt's expectations with respect to the produce of the tax. He had estimated it at ten millions per annum; and

subsequent events proved that he had not over-rated the sources from which it was to have been derived; but from the inaccuracy of the returns on which the duty was charged, and the evasion resulting from that cause, the sum actually received did not average more than five millions. Having thus in his calculations given the tax credit for double the return which it really produced, and being unwilling to increase the funded debt of the country, Mr. Pitt, at the end of each year, met the difficulty by borrowing money to the full extent of the deficiency*, and mortgaging the

* Such was the intended plan. It appears, however, by the subjoined statement, that during three of the four years in which the tax was in operation the pressure of the times compelled Mr. Pitt to borrow sums upon it greatly exceeding in amount its annual deficiencies. So sensible, indeed, did he himself become that he could not further charge the income tax without imminent risk of making it permanent, that in the year 1801 he took credit for no more than 4,200,000*l.* on account of it, instead of 10,000,000*l.*, as in previous years.

Sums borrowed on credit of the Income Tax in 1798 - - -	8,000,000*l.*
— 1799 - - -	12,000,000*l.*
— 1800 - - -	13,500,000*l.*
	33,500,000*l.*

To liquidate which debt Mr. Addington created 56,445,000*l.* 3 per cent. stock; *i.e.* 33,500,000*l.* money produced that amount of 3 per cent. stock at the price of the day.

Lord Sidmouth, in his MS. notes, has given a brief account of these transactions, which will here be subjoined, in confirmation of the present statement. "On the conclusion of peace I determined to discharge, as far as possible, all the outstanding expenses of the war, and to fund the 56,445,000*l.* for which the income tax had been mortgaged. * * * That tax was therefore repealed. * * * Its produce never exceeded 6,000,000*l.*, out of which the interest of the sum for which it had been mortgaged was to be

future revenues of the tax itself as security for repayment. The debt, however, thus created, could never be extinguished during the continuance of the war. Whatever temporary advantage, therefore, may have resulted from the plan, it could not fail to involve the government in much embarrassment at the return of peace, when the public would reasonably expect the cessation of the tax. The only mode, then, by which this expectation could now be satisfied, was to provide for the interest of this sum of 56,445,000*l.* from some other fund, and to add the capital to the general mass of the national debt, to which, in reality, it already belonged; the three per cent. stock, of which it consisted, having always been borrowed as part of the successive loans of each year, and not forming a separate fund. Under these circumstances, Mr. Addington came to the very bold resolution of providing for no less than ninety-seven millions of capital stock in the year 1802, by adding the charge of the above-mentioned sum to that of the loan of the year, amounting to twenty-three millions; besides which, the arrears of the expenses of the war, and the regular charges for the year, had also to be defrayed. As an example of the excess of such expenditure

deducted; hence the proportion applicable to the public service gradually diminished, as year by year the sum borrowed upon the tax increased. So that when Mr. Pitt, in 1801, recurred to the system of loans, which he had before relinquished as injurious to public credit, the available produce of the tax did not exceed 4,000,000*l.*, and it was evident that whilst the mortgage remained, it would be impossible to recur to the system of war taxes in the event of a renewal of hostilities. The desire to remove this impediment was one of the principal reasons why I advised the repeal of the tax."

beyond that of former peace establishments, it may be sufficient to state that in 1792 the number of seamen voted and provided for was only 16,000; whilst in 1802 it never was less than 70,000, which was further reduced to 50,000 in 1803; and that the public expenditure of Great Britain in 1802 amounted to 54,259,000*l.* The charge of so large an addition to the capital of the permanent debt was chiefly provided for by perpetuating certain duties on exports and imports which had been granted only during the continuance of the war, and which were generally known by the name of the convoy tax. Besides this tax, other duties were proposed under the heads of excise and stamps, making in the whole an addition of about four millions to the consolidated fund, and exceeding the new charge then brought upon it by about 800,000*l.* The income tax was in consequence repealed; and while its cessation gave immediate satisfaction to the people, it at the same time prepared and kept in reserve an important resource in the event of the renewal of the war. Mr. Addington had indeed already under his consideration a plan for so new-modelling it as to render it much more productive, but which could not have been brought forward when it was already charged with a heavy debt. This plan will be explained when we come to a subsequent period of Mr. Addington's administration.

"Mr. Pitt was consulted with respect to these arrangements, and fully approved of them all; and they were received with much satisfaction by the public, and had a great effect in reconciling the feelings of the nation to two measures of an unpopular character, which the government not long afterwards felt itself

obliged to bring forward — the discharge of the arrears which had been incurred on the civil list, and the payment of the Prince of Wales's debts. To understand the nature of the civil-list debt, it is necessary to refer to the order of payments established by the Civil-List Act brought in by Mr. Burke in 1782. By that act the civil-list payments were divided into eight classes — of which the first five comprised the King's privy purse, the expenses of the royal family and household, the Lord Chancellor and Judges and British ministers abroad; the sixth, the pension list; the seventh, the various offices of public service payable from the civil list; and the last, the Lords of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer: and it was provided that the payments should always be made in the order of the classes, and that any salary or pension not paid within two years should be wholly cancelled, and not be afterwards payable as an arrear. The consequence of this arrangement was to throw the whole weight of the deficiency on the incomes of public officers, but especially on the Lords of the Treasury, whose salaries were then seven quarters in arrear, and would have been cancelled at the close of another quarter. It was clear that such a state of things could not continue without bringing disgrace and embarrassment into the conduct of public business; and therefore Mr. Addington called the attention of parliament to the position of the civil list by a royal message on the 29th of March, 1802. The House of Commons entered, by means of a committee, into a very minute inquiry respecting the expenses of the civil list; and it clearly appeared that this excess had almost wholly arisen from charges resulting

out of the public service, and especially in the diplomatic branch, which could neither be foreseen nor controlled. It was also proved in figures, that the whole sum received by the King in the course of his reign, including all the supplementary grants, fell short, by upwards of seven millions and a half, of what he would have been entitled to if, at the beginning of his reign, he had not exchanged the accustomed revenues of the crown for an annual allowance. A grant of 990,000*l.* was obtained from parliament to clear off these deficiencies, and new provisions were made to prevent an arrear from again occurring."

In the course of the debates on this subject, Mr. Manners Sutton (afterwards Lord Manners) brought forward, in a very able speech, the claims of the Prince of Wales to the surplus of the income of the Duchy of Cornwall during his Royal Highness's minority, an account of which he moved for. The motion was negatived; but the Prince's embarrassed situation was brought before parliament early in the following session, and an annual sum of 60,000*l.* for three years granted, for the removal of his difficulties.

These were the principal measures of finance which immediately followed the conclusion of the peace. Later in the year 1802 some further approaches were made towards a permanent peace establishment. These Mr. Addington explained to the new House of Commons, on the 10th of December, in a speech which, as well as Lord Bexley's observations upon it, will be reserved until the author shall have arrived at that stage of his narrative. The careful, yet just and liberal manner in which Mr. Addington administered the funds intrusted to him as Prime Minister may

be gathered from the following letter which he addressed to the Secretary of War, Mr. Yorke: —

"My dear Sir, June 6th, 1802.

"I called yesterday at the War Office, with the hope of having a few minutes' conversation with you respecting the salary of the governor of the Military College. If it should appear that his Majesty is at all committed, or that the faith of government is pledged, to the larger sum, you will, I am sure, concur with me in thinking that there is no alternative. If, however, the question is perfectly open, I retain the opinion that 1500*l.* per annum is a fair and liberal allowance. Nothing has been said to me on the subject by his Majesty or the Duke of York. It is my intention to be in town to-morrow; and if you will take the trouble of calling in Downing Street between two and three o'clock, I shall be happy to see you. Ever sincerely yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

The Minister now gave his anxious attention to the arrangement, in conjunction with his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief*, and the Secretary at War, the Right Honourable Charles Yorke, of the military

* The following is the letter in which the Duke of York transmitted the plan for the reduction of the regular forces for Mr. Addington's consideration: —

"Dear Sir, Horse Guards, April 24th, 1802.

"Inclosed I send you an estimate of the proposed peace establishment of the army, supposing the gross amount of the troops, both cavalry and infantry, to be 74,000 men, exclusive of the four regiments of light dragoons and seventeen battalions of infantry allotted for India, and taking credit for 3500 men, or five battalions, which it is presumed will be paid by Jamaica.

"Believe me, dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

"FREDERICK."

The estimate alluded to above was only the original sketch, which accounts for the numbers in it not coinciding with those mentioned by Lord Sidmouth in his note.

peace establishment, respecting which he has recorded in the "manuscript notes" already alluded to, the following statement: —

"The peace establishment consisted of 95,000 regulars and 48,000 militia in Great Britain; in addition to which his Majesty was empowered to call for the services of 24,000 more whenever the situation of the country might appear to render such an augmentation necessary. The amount of the Irish militia was 18,000. It was also determined to keep up a large proportion of the yeomanry and volunteer corps; and liberal allowances were made for that purpose. The ministers, in stating this part of their system to the House of Commons, dwelt particularly on the importance of keeping alive in the country a military spirit; and said that it was only by cultivating amongst all ranks this military character that our national independence and glory could be preserved. It should also be remarked, that each battalion in the army was to consist of 750 men, which might at any time, with a very small addition of officers, be raised to 1000. For this arrangement in the structure of the regiments, the public was indebted to the Commander-in-Chief. It was eminently efficient for military purposes, and was, besides, the most economical and constitutional that could have been adopted; inasmuch as the patronage was not greater than when the regiments consisted of 350 men only, as was the case previous to the late war. This peace establishment, both in its system and amount, seemed to meet the utmost wishes of those who looked with the greatest distrust and apprehension to the power and devices of France. By some

members, indeed, in both Houses it was thought larger than was necessary, but no one ever insinuated that it was not fully sufficient. It was, in fact, founded on a careful review of the state of the Continent, of the augmented influence and extended dominions of France, particularly on the coast, and of the ambitious and restless character of the person at the head of its government." *

The fatigue and anxiety consequent on these varied occupations compelled Mr. Addington, about this period, to search for health and relaxation amongst his friends in Berkshire, from whence he informed his brother, on the 18th of April, that "the air and quiet had already done him so much good, that he really thought another day would set him up for the remainder of the campaign."

One of Mr. Addington's first duties on his return from this excursion was to make a contract for the lottery; and this he effected on such favourable terms, that the profit to government amounted to 555,000*l*., which was an excess of at least 100,000*l*. above all former gains.

In communicating this circumstance to parliament on the 30th of April, he explained the regulation he had adopted for the purpose of effectually checking low insurances and other gambling practices incidental to the lottery system, "the great and ruinous extent of which," he observed, "it was impossible for any person not in possession of official information, to conceive." Hitherto the drawing of lotteries had been extended to forty days, a period which afforded

* Lord Sidmouth's MS. notes.

every facility to such nefarious transactions; Mr. Addington, therefore, proposed to limit the drawing of all lotteries to eight days; entirely to discontinue lotteries in Ireland; and to raise annually the sum of 1,455,000*l.* by three lotteries in Great Britain alone.

To the credit of modern times, this fruitful, but most objectionable, source of revenue has long been entirely relinquished; but let not the tribute of approbation be withheld from the minister who applied the first remedial measures to the evils resulting from the system.

The chief debates of that "campaign" which Mr. Addington now considered himself prepared to encounter, were those of the 3d, 14th, and 15th of May, on the definitive treaty, which subject has already been fully considered. The author passes on, therefore, to the 27th of May, on which day Mr. Canning expressed his objections to grants being made by the Crown of unclaimed lands in the newly-ceded island of Trinidad, and concluded an elaborate speech by moving, that his Majesty be humbly requested not to authorise any grants or sales of new lands in that island without express condition that no negro to be thenceforth imported from Africa should be employed thereon. Mr. Canning had grounded his motion on a rumour which, he stated, was prevalent, that the government had a measure of that nature in contemplation: Mr. Addington, however, on rising to move the previous question, stated that the government entertained no such intention; and that the allusion which he had made in a former debate, to the possibility of applying the proceeds of the sale of Crown lands in alleviating

the pressure of the public charges, related chiefly to the island of St. Vincent. He had long, he added, considered it the wisest policy to increase as much as possible the white and Creole population of those colonies. As regarded the slave trade, to the gradual abolition of which he considered parliament stood pledged, he objected to the application of any principle to the accomplishment of that object that did not apply to the whole of the West India islands; the present was a partial measure, which would effect no beneficial object: it would only occasion an influx of negroes from the other islands, and thus create a chasm which would be supplied by fresh importations from Africa. Mr. Addington then enlarged on the peculiar advantages, as regarded both soil and climate, existing in Trinidad, which rendered the amount of labour necessary for the production of sugars only half that required in the other islands; and announced the appointment of a commission, which government purposed to send out, to make a minute investigation respecting every circumstance connected with the cultivation of all the colonies in the West Indies. He concluded with a hope that, in the course of the next session of parliament, a committee of that House would be appointed, for the purpose of carrying out that great principle embodied in the resolution of 1792, to which a large majority of the House had agreed, with a view to the gradual abolition of the slave trade. The previous question was carried without a division. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the resumption of hostilities in the succeeding year frustrated the expectation here expressed of the early settlement of this difficult question.

The next public business of any importance was the moving, on the 9th of June, for a vote of 70,000 seamen for the next seven months, upon which occasion Mr. Addington stated, in reply to a question of Mr. Tierney's, that "no opinion should be inferred from the present motion, as to the permanent peace establishment, but that he hoped 30,000 men would be all that would be required for the sea service."

Another important measure which Mr. Addington brought forward at this period, was his plan for consolidating the sinking fund, a plan of which Mr. Pitt highly approved*; even this, however, excited but little notice, and it was obvious that the superior interest of the definitive treaty had wholly absorbed the public attention. The session itself, indeed, was drawing to a conclusion; and on the 22d of June, Mr. Addington, following the precedent of the pre-

* This is stated on the authority of Lord Bexley, from whom the author received the following explanation of the alteration which Mr. Addington made in the sinking fund in 1802. "By Mr. Pitt's system each loan act contained provision for its own eventual liquidation; according to which, therefore, every portion of the debt would have been liquidated in gradual succession. But Mr. Addington consolidated all the provisions previously made for liquidating the separate loans into one fund, whereby the whole debt would eventually be discharged at the same period, which was calculated at about forty-five years from that time. The mode of liquidation which Mr. Pitt had provided was a tax of one per cent. on the amount of every loan, which was to form a fund applicable each year to the discharge of that loan; but Mr. Addington, in consequence of the consolidation, was enabled to dispense with the one per cent. as regarded the ninety-seven millions recently borrowed, and thus relieved the public to the amount of 970,000*l.* of annual taxes, which must otherwise have been raised, to form a sinking fund for the discharge of this new loan."

vious year, submitted to the House a series of financial resolutions, in answer to a statement of a similar nature which Mr. Tierney had placed on the table five days before. The two statements, which, as each was founded on returns before the House, contained no material differences, presented the finances of the country in a satisfactory point of view, and were amicably discussed, by their respective authors, on the 25th of June, when the resolutions proposed by Mr. Addington were carried without opposition. The usual sessional orders followed this discussion. On the 28th of June the King closed the session by a speech from the throne; and on the following day the parliament, which had continued for six full sessions, was dissolved by proclamation.

During the latter part of the session, Mr. Pitt, who had been seriously indisposed, was recruiting his health at Walmer, from whence he addressed several friendly and confidential letters to Mr. Addington. In one of these, dated June 7th, Mr. Pitt shows that he had been intrusted with the secret, if such it was, of the approaching dissolution.

"I rejoice that your business is so forward. If it is out of the House of Commons by the day you mention, I imagine we may expect the prorogation and its sequel about the 24th or 25th. I have had no opportunity of hearing any thing that I can depend upon respecting Dover. * * * The air I am breathing and the life I am leading are every thing that is healthy, and I am gaining ground every day; but in doing so I discover how much more I had lost than I was aware of.

"Ever affectionately yours, W. P."

Mr. Pitt's next letter speaks as follows of election movements: —

"Walmer Castle, June 24th.

"I mean to be in town by five, at latest, on Sunday; and if it continues to be convenient to you that our engagement should hold, I shall be very glad to take a quiet dinner with you at six. * * * Perhaps if you should have no particular use for your carriage and horses, you would let it be in Park Place a quarter before six to convey me. * * * I conclude the proclamation will issue on Tuesday, and the writs be ready to be forwarded by that day's post."

Two days afterwards Mr. Pitt informed his friend that —

"The delightful weather afforded a strong temptation to make use of the respite he had sent him; but upon the whole it would suit him better to adhere to the former plan, as he wished to reach Cambridge in time to get through as much of his canvass as he could before two or three gala days of music.

"I lose no time," he added, "in returning the draft of the speech, which appears to me to be excellent, and to bear no marks either of the lamp or the nightcap. I have ventured, however, to attempt to heighten a little the principal tirade, by a few verbal alterations, but chiefly by inserting, as shortly as possible, two or three leading topics, which seem material enough to deserve particular notice. You will find the sentence, as it would stand according to the suggestion, in a separate paper.

"I am not only much better, but (as it is impossible not to be after three weeks here), for the present at least, perfectly well."

The correspondence now for a considerable period was almost entirely engrossed by election matters. Mr. Addington himself visited his constituents at Devizes on the 5th of July, and was re-elected with the usual unanimity so honourable to all parties. Amongst the trials of strength which ensued, that which excited most interest was the contest for Mid-

dlesex, respecting which Mr. Pitt, on the 29th of July, expressed himself in the following terms: — "I shall be impatient to hear the result of Burdett's triumphal entry, though I think it will end without his being proclaimed first consul; and as to his being member for Middlesex, I do not suffer myself to think there is any chance of it, unless his mob decrees the repeal of Grenville's bill, and appoints Horne Tooke to decide, in the name of the sovereign people, all controverted elections." *

The final returns were, on the whole, satisfactory. Mr. Dundas, for instance, who during three weeks had actively exerted himself in promoting the government interests in Scotland, informed the Premier, on the 27th of July, that "the success had been very complete, although the democratic interest had been more alive and active than he had known for many years past;" and Lord Castlereagh, on the same day, communicated from Ireland the cheering intelligence "that, fortunately for the tranquillity of the country, the elections had in general been very little contested, and that the individuals chosen were perfectly proper persons, both in principles and property." With respect to England, as Mr. Addington informed Mr. Pole Carew, "the elections had little or no effect as far as party strength was concerned."

At this period the omission of the governors of the Charter House to appoint a successor to Lord Kenyon afforded the King an opportunity of testifying his approbation of his Minister, by voluntarily conferring the nomination upon him. This gracious intention

* Sir Francis was, however, elected.

his Majesty communicated to Mr. Addington in the following terms: —

"Weymouth, July 24th, 1802.

"The King is extremely glad to learn that the Governors of the Charter House have let the time elapse when they could elect one in the room of Lord Kenyon, as it gives the nomination to him. His Majesty therefore authorises Mr. Addington to acquaint the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the part of the Governors, that the King names Mr. Addington to the said vacancy."

Three days afterwards his Majesty was pleased to express himself as "highly approving of Mr. Addington's having appointed his son to succeed Lieutenant Colonel Barré as Clerk of the Pells."

The pure air and comparative retirement of Eastbourne, to which Mr. Addington proceeded on the 27th of July, had now become quite essential to his health. He very rarely alluded in his letters to himself, but in writing to his brother on this occasion he observed: —

"We all are the better for Eastbourne; but I was quite worked down, and recruit slowly. I have, in some measure, recovered my appetite, but I sleep indifferently, and suffer more than usual from my side. Abbot is here, and I expect Pitt and Bragge within the next ten or twelve days. It is, however, possible that I may pay the first visit to each of them, as I have some thoughts of going to Walmer on Monday, and of taking Hastings in my way. I have brought with me a frightful arrear of business and letters, to which I devote from five to six hours in the day."*

* Mr. Addington's visit to Eastbourne is alluded to in Mr. Abbot's diary in the following terms: — "We spent August and September at Eastbourne, where Mr. Addington and his family came for great part of the time, and I had much confidential con-

Several notes passed between Mr. Addington and Mr. Pitt respecting the reciprocal visits alluded to in the preceding letter; but engagements unluckily intervened, and no meeting occurred at that period. Mr. Addington's health and occupations are again alluded to in a letter which he addressed to the Bishop of Gloucester on the 7th of August.

"The invalids of my family," he observed, "are recovering rapidly, and I will own to you, *in confidence*, that I am one of that description. My furlough will expire on the 16th, when I must go to town, but I hope to obtain a renewal of it. I have brought with me a formidable arrear of business, to which I am compelled to surrender many hours of the day; but I breathe a good air, and experience but little interruption. The Clerk of the Pells is quite well. I am endeavouring to lead him into habits of systematic application. His reading has been hitherto somewhat desultory, though his taste has generally taken a good direction. His favourite English authors at present are Bacon and Dryden."

The next letter which invites attention is one dated August 10th, from Mr. Dundas, warmly thanking Mr. Addington for "his favour of the 2d, intimating

versation with him upon the events of the last two years, and the general state of politics, both in Europe and India, but more particularly upon the affairs of Ireland, the Catholics, &c. &c. Relative to the latter point, I wrote at large, with Mr. Addington's approbation, to Lord Hardwicke, Lord Redesdale, and Mr. Wickham. The substance of the communication was, that nothing more than occasional relief, and in the nature of a compassionate allowance, could be granted to the Irish Catholic priests, and this to be expressly marked as carrying with it no recognition of their establishment, jurisdiction, titles, or assumed authority; adding also to the same communication, that even this could only be done after, and subservient to, some leading measure for making a better provision for the Protestant Established Church."

his Majesty's most gracious intention of conferring on him, without solicitation, the dignity of a viscount of the United Kingdom," and requesting him to accept his sincere acknowledgments "for the polite and friendly terms in which he had conveyed to him his Majesty's commands."

Soon afterwards Mr. Pitt made another friendly but unsuccessful offer to sail round to Eastbourne in the Trinity yacht. From the letter in which this was conveyed, copious extracts will be made, as it presents this great statesman in the new, and, it may be conjectured, unsuitable character of the manager of a large farm. It is dated "Walmer Castle, September 5th," and after lamenting the unfavourable state of the wind, proceeds as follows: —

"I am afraid you are now likely to return to town for the first levee, if there should be one this week, and I fear you have not much prospect of another furlough. If, however, you should find it in your power, and will let me know what your plans are, I will certainly contrive to come to you before the end of the month, having no engagement likely to confine me here, except during a few days which my niece is to pass with me in her way to the Continent. I should be very glad to show you all the improvements of this place both in beauty and comfort, but, in the state of your family, you must wish to be as little absent from them as possible, and I shall, on that account, much prefer coming to you, and trust to some more convenient opportunity of seeing you here. The measles will, I hope, have passed away with as little anxiety as you could expect; and if you are able to return to the sea-side, the cool breezes which have succeeded the excessive heat will, I flatter myself, have carried away your headache. I am extremely well, and enjoying very good shooting; which, in a few weeks, I shall exchange for the management of a large farm which I am just preparing to take possession of, and

which (if parliament fortunately can be deferred till after Christmas) will keep me constantly employed for the remainder of the year, or till the *pacificator of Europe* takes it into his head to send an army from the opposite coast to revenge himself for some newspaper paragraph.

"Ever affectionately yours, W. PITT."

From the letter next in succession, which was addressed to Mr. Hiley Addington, the more youthful reader will learn with surprise, that, as late as the present century, levees were held in the month of September.

"Eastbourne, Sept. 11th.

"I returned last night from attending the levee, where every thing went off pleasantly. I must be in town again on Thursday morning, without a prospect of returning to this place. You will be glad to hear that we are likely to occupy Richmond Lodge early in October. The enclosed, from Pitt, will give you much pleasure: pray return it. I rather expect him here to-morrow. The revenue is flourishing beyond example: it will probably have yielded, on the 5th of January, as much as I was charged with being sanguine in reckoning upon as its amount on the 5th of April. The new taxes are productive greatly beyond the estimate. Lord Castlereagh came here on Wednesday se'nnight, and left me on Saturday.* We passed the two days almost entirely together; and the result was more satisfactory to me than I can possibly express."

Amongst the momentous questions which painfully occupied Mr. Addington's attention at this period, was the arrival of two letters of resignation addressed to him by Lord Wellesley. Of these documents, the former has already become the property of the public,

* His Lordship was gazetted on the 6th of July chairman of the Board of Control, and in October became a member of the cabinet.

having been introduced into the third volume of the "Dispatches of Marquis Wellesley;" but the latter, together with Mr. Addington's reply, will now be presented.

The Marquis Wellesley to the Right Hon. Henry Addington.

"My dear Addington, Benares, March 13th, 1802.

"This despatch conveys my resignation of this government to the Court of Directors: my motives for this step are stated in a letter addressed to you, under date the 10th of January, 1802. * * * I am satisfied that you will give your immediate and most serious attention to the subject of these despatches, as well on account of their importance to the public interests in India, as of their connexion with my reputation and honour. * * * I trust you will approve the temper and respectful tone of my despatches addressed to the Court of Directors: I request you to send for them; they are not voluminous. The principal object of this letter is to apprise you, that I am so convinced of the public importance of my continuance in India for one season beyond January, 1803, that, notwithstanding my resignation, I am ready to remain in India, on the following conditions, until the close of January, 1804, beyond which period of time it will be impossible for me to protract my continuance here: — 1st, that the Court of Directors shall address a separate letter to me by express, intimating to me the desire of the Court that I should continue at the head of the government of India for another season; and assuring me that I possess the full confidence of the Court, and that I shall receive its cordial support and co-operation during the remainder of my government. 2dly, that his Majesty's ministers shall convey to me an assurance of their confidence, and of their intention to afford me full support and protection; and, with these views, shall afford me the further assurance, that, during the remainder of my government, the Court of Directors shall not be permitted to interfere, by direct appointments from home, in the local executive administration of any of the presidencies; but that the government of India shall be maintained in a proper

condition of dignity, authority, and power, and suffered to exercise the free selection of the necessary instruments for the conduct of subordinate official duties. This assurance from his Majesty's ministers may be conveyed through the medium of private letters from you and from Lord Dartmouth. The first condition is absolutely requisite for the maintenance of my authority in India; and copies of the letter of the Court should be transmitted to each of the subordinate presidencies. I require no assurance from the Court which shall limit their supposed patronage; but I shall consider any direct appointment from home to an executive office in India, below the council, to be equivalent to my recall; with the exception, however, of certain offices in the marine, which the Court has usually given at home. The second condition is necessary to prevent me from suffering, during the year 1803–4, the same vexations and embarrassments which have caused my resignation: without some security of this nature, the Court of Directors might contrive to frustrate my power of control over the subordinate presidencies, and to extinguish my authority in Bengal. The principal objects which I hope to accomplish by remaining in India one year after the month of January, 1803, are these: —The complete settlement of the ceded provinces in Oude, which, under proper arrangements, will soon produce a revenue nearly equal to that of Bengal; the introduction into the territories subject to Fort St. George of the same system of government under which Bengal has risen to such a state of opulence and prosperity; the reduction of expenses and augmentation of resources at all the presidencies in consequence of the peace, and the establishment of a general system of finance for the gradual diminution of the debt. This last object I entertain no doubt of effecting, to an extent fully equal to the most sanguine expectations raised by Mr. Dundas. His plan, contained in his letter to the court of the 30th June, 1801, is perfectly practicable. I shall be able to lay the foundations of the whole plan in the course of the next ensuing six months; and therefore, even if I should return to Europe in 1803, I shall render a most satisfactory account of the finance. But in the course of the

year 1803, if I should remain in India, I could bring the whole plan into full operation. With this view I propose to pass the greater part of 1803 at Fort St. George and Bombay, where my presence is much required for the purpose of completing various important arrangements. My opinion is, that any person who might succeed me would find more difficulty in completing the arrangements subsequent to the peace than could be experienced by an authority so established as mine. But without the two conditions specified in this letter neither my authority nor that of any Governor General can be efficient or vigorous. The management of the French, to whatever extent they may be permitted to return to India, will be a point of the utmost difficulty and importance, which will require the exercise of the most decided and acknowledged authority in every part of Asia. You will judge whether my continuance in Asia for another year be an object of importance in your estimation, and you will act accordingly. If you should be desirous of my continuance at my arduous post, you ought not to delay a despatch by sea and land more than a few hours after the receipt of this letter; for I am resolved to embark in the last week of January, 1803, unless my continuance can be rendered advantageous to the public service by the measures proposed in this letter. You will perceive, by these despatches, that I have prevailed with Lord Clive to remain in India until the month of January, 1803: at that period of time he will positively embark, and the choice of his successor is a most important question. By prevailing with Lord Clive to remain in India, I have secured the speedy introduction of Lord Cornwallis's salutary system of laws and regulations on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar; and I have succeeded in inducing Mr. Cockburn, the most able and honest officer of revenue on the coast, to remain, for the purpose of aiding Lord Clive in this great work. The orders of the Court of Directors would certainly have forced Mr. Cockburn to retire, if I had not interposed. I remain ever, my dear Addington, yours most faithfully and affectionately,

"WELLESLEY.

"N.B. The restoration of Mr. Webbe at Madras, or at

least an order declaring that the Court does not object to his employment in the office of secretary, would be highly useful in restoring general confidence at Fort St. George.

"In reading over this letter, I perceive that I have omitted to mention, that, in addition to the public exigency, my principal motives for determining to remain in India during the year 1803 (under the stated conditions) are, the intimation, received through Mr. Scott, of your wish for my continuance, and an earnest request from Lord Dartmouth to the same effect, expressed in the most honourable and cordial terms."—W.

To this and the preceding communication of January 10th, Mr. Addington replied on the 26th of September, 1802, in the following terms:—

To the Marquis Wellesley.

"My dear Lord,

"The substance of the communication which you will receive from the Court of Directors, in consequence of your letters to me of the 10th of January and the 13th of March, 1802, will, I trust, fully meet your wishes. I have great pleasure in accompanying it by an assurance, that his Majesty's confidential servants entertain a high sense of the magnitude and importance of your Lordship's services; and that nothing has come to their knowledge which will prevent them from giving their utmost support, both in and out of parliament, to the measures of your government, and to those which have been conducted by your direction at Fort St. George. Under these circumstances, they earnestly hope that you will be induced to remain in India till the end of the ensuing year, as they are thoroughly convinced that the government of that country cannot be administered, during that period, with so much authority and advantage by any person whatever as by yourself.

"Believe me to be, with true respect and regard, my dear Lord, most affectionately and sincerely yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

And here it is necessary to depart from chrono-

logical order, that the reader may at once learn the result of this correspondence, which is comprised in two letters from Marquis Wellesley dated "Barrackpore, February 12th, 1803;" one marked "private," the other "private and confidential." Of the contents of the former, which appears to have been intended for the perusal of "his Majesty's confidential servants" generally, a brief abstract is given in a note *; but the latter, as containing the communication of the Governor General's inmost sentiments to his confidential friend, will be here presented entire.

[Private and confidential.]

"My dear Addington, Barrackpore, Feb. 12th, 1803.

"I return you many thanks for your kind letter, marked 'secret,' of the 28th September, 1802: you will perceive by my despatches to the Court of Directors, and by my 'private' letters of this date to you, that I am entirely satisfied with the measures which you have taken for removing the difficulties which opposed my further continuance in India. Lord Castlereagh's conduct and language are also perfectly satisfactory; and I anticipate an able and successful administration of Indian affairs under his superintendence. The attack on the recent settlement of the Carnatic proceeds from the Nabob's creditors, who would, however, have acted more

* In this letter his Lordship represented that, in consequence of "the extraordinary state of affairs in the Mahrattah empire, he had determined to remain in India for another season; that he confidently hoped the commotions in the Mahrattah states would eventually prove favourable to the British interests; that the desire which Mr. Addington had conveyed to him in the name of the King's ministers, that he should remain another year in India, would have claimed his obedience under any circumstances; and that he should now retain his station with a greater confidence of success, after the honourable testimony he had received of the favourable opinion of Mr. Addington and the rest of his Majesty's confidential advisers."

wisely if they had remained quiet, and had trusted their cause to me. At a proper season after the confirmation of the treaty in England, I should have proposed a just settlement of their demands on the basis once proposed by me to the Nabob Omdut al Omrah in a letter dated the 24th April, 1799. The Nabob peremptorily rejected that part of my plan in the same spirit of profligate treachery which marked all his proceedings; and if the treasons of his faithless Highness had escaped with impunity, the creditors would have retained no better security for their claims than the Company for its subsidy. The new settlement affords an opportunity of providing funds for the gradual discharge of such part of the debt as may be deemed just and legal, after full inquiry by a competent authority; and my opinion always has been, that some inquiry of this description ought to precede any arrangement respecting the debts of the Nabob of the Carnatic. The imprudence of the creditors and the villany of their agents will not move my temper, nor induce me to oppose any just and reasonable arrangement; but I will never recommend nor tacitly submit to any general acknowledgment of the legality of the whole debt: many branches of it are certainly usurious, and connected with violent outrages upon the Company's legal authority; others may deserve consideration; and some are entitled to favour. The time is now arrived when it may be proper to institute an inquiry, either under the authority of parliament, or of a commission with the aid of the local government of India. I trust that you will tread this ground with caution; since it would be equally unjust to burden the public (*i. e.* the Company) with the whole debt, and to preclude all consideration of the claims of the creditors. The settlement of the Carnatic is perhaps the most salutary and useful measure which has been adopted in India since the acquisition of the Dewanny of Bengal. The justice of the transaction is as unquestionable as its policy; and I confess that I never expected blame for any part of it, excepting the delay of judgment after full conviction of the criminal. That delay proceeded from mixed considerations of lenity and policy; and it affords the most incontestable proof of the deliberation with which I proceeded.

"I am happy to hear that my cause (which is that of Great Britain in India) will be so honourably and ably defended; but I must say, that so far from entertaining any apprehension of censure, (for having saved the interests of my country from the most atrocious of traitors, and for having rendered his treasons a fresh source of wealth and power to the Company,) I claim from the public as great a tribute of gratitude on account of my service in the rescue of the Carnatic, as I received for the conquest and settlement of Mysore. Perhaps, indeed, the advantages secured in the Carnatic may be found, upon accurate examination, to surpass those obtained in Mysore; and the difficulty of conducting the settlement in the Carnatic was at least equal to that of the negotiations and war with Tippoo Sultan. With regard to any other meditated attacks, it will be soon enough to think of them when they shall appear in any distinct form. The state of every branch of this government, and the conscious sense of the motives which have governed every measure of my administration, preclude me from anticipating any attack which has not been distinctly announced. You will receive by this despatch, and by the Swallow packet, the most ample details respecting Oude. My brother Henry will return to Europe in the Swallow. I request you, however, to read the documents respecting Oude, transmitted by the Telegraph, at your earliest leisure; for although I trust that the Swallow may be despatched soon after the Telegraph, it will be a great advantage, in your conversations with Mr. Wellesley, that you should have previously considered the correspondence with Oude. You may be assured that I continue to repose the most cordial confidence in your public and private honour; nor have my sentiments of friendship, kindness, and personal respect ever suffered the slightest abatement. The information which I have received from various quarters, of the zeal, assiduity, and firmness which have distinguished your support of my character and public services in the present crisis, has not been lost upon my mind; but it has not in any degree excited an emotion of surprise: whatever may be the vicissitude of public affairs, I think I can rely on the immutable firmness of our friendship. I have suffered the

most severe pain from witnessing, even at this distance, the differences which prevail between some of those persons who must ever be the primary objects of my esteem and regard, as well as of my most respectful attachment.* I trust in God that I shall never be called upon to decide upon a choice of political alternatives, which must involve my friendship with one or other of such parties. My greatest ambition, upon my return to Europe, would be to become the bond of union between them, and to be the instrument of reconciling those who ought never to have been divided. Having no personal objects to pursue, having been removed from the scene of contention, and possessing, I trust, the confidence of all my former friends, my endeavours will be uniformly directed to produce such a co-operation among them, as shall present the most formidable obstacle to the attempts of that faction, which never can gain an atom of strength or of character, otherwise than at the expense of the public safety and of the established constitution. With these sentiments I desire neither power, emolument, nor honours upon my return to England: my wish is to preserve the regard of my friends for myself, and to restore their union for the preservation of the country. In such a course, office or honours will not engage my attention; but I never will withhold my assistance from the public service, while the cause which so long has united us shall demand my exertions. * * * I am highly gratified by your account of your own family and of mine. I beg to be remembered most kindly to Mrs. Addington, to Harry, and to Hiley, of whose able services in any situation I never entertained a doubt. * * * I congratulate you on your prosperous state of finance in England: the finances of India will, I trust, far surpass your most sanguine expectations in the course of another year.

"Believe me to be, my dear Addington, yours most affectionately and sincerely,

"WELLESLEY."

* His Lordship here alluded to the opposition raised by Lord Grenville and his party against the peace.

On the 15th of October, Mr. Addington, with his family, took possession of the White Lodge, Richmond Park, from whence he informed his brother, on the 18th, "how comfortable they were." One of his earliest visiters in his new abode was Mr. Pitt, who wrote on the 17th, offering to pass the following Sunday with him on his way to Bath. Two days afterwards the post brought another note from Mr. Pitt, which, as it contains an allusion to the question of finance, will here be inserted. "Walmer Castle, Tuesday, October 19th. Many thanks for both your letters. If I find my brother is not to be in town on Sunday, I will come on to the White Lodge to dinner at six, and if I dine with him, will come to you in the evening. I shall like if possible to get as far as Reading on Monday night. Your account of the consolidated fund gave me, as you will believe, great pleasure, and I made Steele very happy by communicating it to him." Mr. Pitt fulfilled this engagement on Sunday, October 24th, and proceeded on his journey upon the following day. This fact Mr. Addington communicated to Mr. Abbot on the 30th, in the following words: — "Pitt dined and slept here on Sunday in his way to Bath. He has no symptoms of illness, and very slight traces of it in his looks, and none whatever in his appetite and spirits." A peculiar gloom overhangs this journey, since it was during his present visit to Bath that Mr. Pitt appears to have first adopted that view of public affairs which alienated him from the policy and party of his friend and successor, and placed him eventually in the ranks of opposition by the side of his great rival and constant opponent, Mr. Fox. Probably, however, neither

party was aware at this moment even that the seeds of disunion between them were sown at all, still less that they were so near the surface. Mr. Addington transmitted to Mr. Pitt, at Bath, the earliest intimation that the parliament would meet on the 16th of November, and the speech be delivered on the 23d; and as "the accounts from Switzerland had now become critical, and those from France, in consequence of the transactions in that country, intolerable," he pressed his brother to see Mr. Pitt when passing through Bath, on his way from his seat near Bristol, to London, and to confer with him on the posture of affairs.* Mr. Hiley Addington accordingly visited Mr. Pitt on the 6th or 7th of November, and a long, friendly, and confidential conversation ensued, to which the latter alluded in the following important letter of advice, which three days afterwards he addressed to Mr. Addington: —

"Bath, Nov. 10th, 1802.

"By a letter which I have just received from Vansittart, I am led to think that there is not much chance of your being able to announce any thing decisive at the meeting of parliament. I am therefore rather confirmed in my inclination to remain here, especially as I believe that following up the effect of the Bath waters for two or three weeks more without interruption, will be of as much advantage to me as a second visit of twice the length. On the general state of things I can form very little judgment; but I rather fear, from the accounts from the Continent, that there is very little

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* "My dear Hiley, Downing Street, November 4th.

"I cannot help wishing *very earnestly* that you should see Pitt in your way through Bath. Andreossi is expected to-morrow.

"Your affectionate H. A."

prospect of your meeting with any effectual support from thence at present, either in an attempt to save Switzerland, or for any other useful purpose. If this should be the case, I own that, on reflection, I doubt very much the prudence, though not at all the justice, of risking *at all hazards* the determination of withholding such of the restitutions as have not yet taken place; and, having conceived this doubt, I feel anxious just to state it to you, because I certainly was very strongly inclined to the contrary opinion, both when I conversed with you, and as late as when I saw your brother here in his way to town. I am by no means sure that we should not sufficiently consult our real security, preserving at the same time the advantages of peace, by contenting ourselves with a state of *very increased and constant preparation*, both naval and military; and by endeavouring, in the mean time, to lay the foundation of a defensive system in Europe, rather than by involving ourselves *immediately* in a separate war, only for the advantage of being to carry it on with these possessions still in our hands. I state this, however, only as a doubt; feeling that I have not the grounds before me to form any decisive judgment in my own mind, and much less any worth offering to others. If a different line should, upon the whole, have been judged the right one, there are abundant grounds on which it may be justified; and there will remain nothing for any one who wishes well to the country but to endeavour to support it with all possible vigour. I have troubled you with more than perhaps was necessary; but I have felt uneasy lest you should conceive my opinion on this point to be more decided than it is. Of course some new arrangement must, I suppose, be made about Malta.

"Affectionately yours, W. P."

The letter next in succession relates to a very different subject, and will be introduced merely to demonstrate the multiplicity of objects which occupied the time and care of the Minister of that period. It is a letter to Mr. Addington from Sir John Sinclair, "thanking him for the attention he had paid to the improvement of

the northern part of the kingdom; and assuring him that the inquiries in progress, and the amelioration likely to result from them, had given much satisfaction, and would, he trusted, contribute materially to check the spirit of emigration, which was becoming prevalent over all the Highland districts." Here also a circumstance must be mentioned which, although it did not fall under Mr. Addington's immediate department, and is not, therefore, specially alluded to in the correspondence, occupies, nevertheless, too prominent a position in the history of the period to be entirely overlooked. On the 19th of November, Colonel Despard and thirty associates, six of whom were soldiers and the remainder labourers, were apprehended at a public house in Lambeth, called the Oakley Arms, and committed to different prisons for trial for seditious practices. Fifteen more persons were subsequently taken up, making the whole number of prisoners forty-six. Despard himself was confined in Newgate, charged with high treason; and was tried for that offence before Lord Ellenborough, on the 7th of February, 1803. The principal count in the indictment was for "having conspired with others to seduce several soldiers, for the purpose of subverting the government, and with intent to destroy the King;" and this charge was so clearly established by the evidence that the jury had no alternative but to find him guilty. On Monday the 21st of February, with six of his deluded accomplices, two of whom were privates of the Foot Guards, he paid on the scaffold the fatal penalty of a crime so utterly unaccountable and atrocious that it appears difficult to attribute it to any other cause than insanity. The

annals of crime relate, we find, another singular event which occurred at this period—the conviction, in the Court of King's Bench, on the 29th of November, of a person named Hamlyn, for offering to Mr. Addington a bribe of 2000*l.* if he would procure him the office of landing surveyor at Plymouth, then vacant. The defendant was prosecuted by the crown, and was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and a fine of 100*l.* The author finds no allusion to this circumstance in the papers intrusted to him, and has, therefore, extracted this statement from the public records of the period.

We have now reached the 16th of November, on which day, to quote the diary of Mr. Abbot, "the new parliament met," and that gentleman was "unanimously re-elected Speaker." Before, however, he proceeds to relate the circumstances of this important session the author must make good his ground, by directing attention to two subjects, the widely-scattered materials of which he has reserved for notice at this place. The first relates to the illustrious and unfortunate House of Nassau; whose interests, although Mr. Addington, at the risk, as has been seen, of interrupting the negotiations, had obtained a special article in their favour in the treaty of Amiens, had been most dishonourably set aside through the non-observance of the separate convention of the 25th of March, 1802, between the French and Batavian republics. Nothing, therefore, having been done on the Continent to improve the position of the Prince and Princess of Orange, the latter of whom was residing, with her family, in the utmost privacy, at Hampton Court, his Majesty was naturally desirous,

as one of the parties who had guaranteed the peace, to fulfil at least his own part of the engagement, by proposing to the parliament a pecuniary grant in their favour. The sum originally destined by the government for this purpose was 220,000*l.*, of which 60,000*l.* was intended to be placed in trust, for the benefit of the Princess; and the remainder to be paid, as long as it lasted, to the Prince, in the shape of an annuity of 20,000*l.* The difficulty was, how to announce his Majesty's intentions to the parties in the manner most satisfactory to their feelings; and it was imagined, erroneously, as it proved, that instead of treating the payment in its true light, as a gift, it would be a more delicate mode of proceeding to represent it as the value of the Dutch vessels which were surrendered to the English fleet in the Texel, in 1799.* In order, however, to sound the feelings of the emigrant court on the subject, Mr. Addington made the proposition in this shape to the agent of the House of Orange, M. Fagel, who communicated it to the Princess at Hampton Court; and received from her Royal High-

* The idea of regarding this grant as the price of the vessels which we took possession of in 1799 did not originate with the British ministers, but with the Dutch government, which, after the peace of Amiens, offered to indemnify the Prince solely on the condition that England should restore those vessels, which of course was refused. The value of the vessels was 150,000*l.*, and it was argued in parliament by Mr. Addington and Lord Hawkesbury, that as our retaining them deprived the Prince of the compensation he otherwise would have received, he had a claim, if not upon the justice, at least upon the generosity of the British nation to that amount. The House of Commons took precisely the same view of the subject, and the motion was carried all but unanimously, only two voices being raised against it, those of Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Canning. — *See Debate of the 25th July*, 1803.

ness, on the 4th of July, 1802, a long reply, from which the following extracts are taken* :—

"Je vous prie, de faire mes remerciments à Mr. Addington, de la peine qu'il a prise de vous écrire pour m'informer, qu'il était persuadé, que l'on ne pouvoit mettre en doute la validité des prétentions de la Maison d'Orange à la charge de ce pays, pour la somme de 220,000*l.* ou environ. Mais, permettez-moi, Monsieur, de vous observer, que la Maison d'Orange n'a fait aucune réclamation, ni formé de prétention à la charge du gouvernement Brittanique, pour cette somme de 220,000*l.* * * * Nous n'avons jamais pu regarder les vaisseaux, qui se sont rendus aux ordres du Prince d'Orange en 1799, comme notre propriété, nous n'avons aucun droit à en reclamer la valeur, et nous ne pouvons jamais rien accepter de la parte du gouvernement Brittanique sous ce rapport. * * * En conséquence de cela, et étant informée de la façon de penser sur ce point du Prince d'Orange et de mon fils, je déclare ici que je ne puis accepter l'arrangement que le gouvernement Brittanique voudroit faire pour l'avantage de ma famille et pour le mien propre, que, comme *une faveur* spéciale de sa Majesté, qui nous sera d'autant plus précieuse, que nous ne la devrons qu'aux seules bontés du Roi. * * * Vous m'avez parlé de ce que Mr. Addington vous avoit dit dans la conversation que vous eûtes avec ce ministre, que l'intention du Roi et de son gouvernement étoit, qu'une partie du capital devoit être à ma disposition; quelque sensible que je sois à cette marque toute particulière de sa bienveillance, je dois cependant représenter que je ne saurois accepter ceci que sous le bon plaisir du Prince d'Orange. * * *

"Je ne cesserai d'être, avec une parfaite estime, Monsieur, votre affectionée servante,

"WILHELMINE." †

* Copied from the original letter of the Princess, which is amongst the Sidmouth papers.

† Attached to this letter is an extract from one addressed by the Prince of Orange to his son, the hereditary prince, on the 20th of June, precisely to the same effect, namely, that he could not

These noble and disinterested sentiments of the Princess of Orange at once decided Mr. Addington, whose only anxiety was to relieve the embarrassments of that illustrious personage and her house in the manner most agreeable to herself. On the 14th of July, therefore, he addressed to her Highness the following letter from Downing Street: —

"Madam,

"In obedience to his Majesty's commands, I have the honour of communicating to your Royal Highness his Majesty's gracious intention of recommending to his parliament to enable him to grant to his Serene Highness the Prince of Orange an annuity of 20,000*l.* in consideration of the losses which the House of Orange has sustained within the last eight years, and likewise of proposing at the same time that the sum of 60,000*l.* be appropriated to the sole use of your Royal Highness, as an especial mark of his Majesty's esteem and favour, and as an indemnity for the separate losses which your Royal Highness has suffered during the period that has been mentioned. Your Royal Highness will be pleased to consider this communication as strictly confidential, on account of the effect which it might otherwise produce on foreign negotiations, and in consequence of the necessity of submitting the substance of it to the approbation of the parliament of the United Kingdom.

"I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect, Madam, your Royal Highness's most humble and faithful servant,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

On the 15th of July, two days only before she returned to the Continent, after having resided for seven and a half years at Hampton Court, this estimable Princess expressed the most heartfelt ac-

honourably accept the assistance offered as the price of the vessels, but that as an indemnity for his losses he would receive it with gratitude.

knowledgements to Mr. Addington, in two letters, one written on her husband's behalf, and the other on her own. The latter document, after expressing her Royal Highness's grateful acceptance of the specified sum as an ample indemnity for her special losses, concludes with the following words: —

"Je vous prie, Monsieur, d'être persuadé que je sens tout le prix des bons offices que vous m'avez rendus dans cette occasion, et que je ne perdrai jamais le souvenir de l'obligation que je vous en ai, de même qu'aux autres ministres de sa Majesté.

"Je ne cesserai d'être, avec considération distinguée, Monsieur, votre affectionée servante,

"WILHELMINE."

The next letter in this series, is one dated August 12th, 1802, from the Prince of Orange himself to Mr. Addington, in which his Serene Highness expressed his "respectful and profound gratitude to the King and his ministers, but at the same time intimated, that it would be more agreeable to him to receive the intended bounty at once, and in a single sum, than by way of annuity.

Upon the above wish of the Prince, Lord Auckland, who appears to have been much in the confidence of his Serene Highness, and to have taken a lively interest in his affairs, made the following observation in a note to Mr. Addington, dated "October 18th, 1802: — "I have only one farther remark to submit on the whole transaction, *which will do honour to your administration* in the opinion of parliament, and the public. If it should be decided to give the Prince a sum of money in lieu of the annuity, I conceive it to be essential, that the sum so given should be secured in

trust for the permanent benefit of the good Princess and her children." Writing on the same subject on the 11th of November, his Lordship remarked:— "Nothing is now wanting but the Prince of Orange's acceptance to enable you to submit to parliament a mode of indemnity conformable to the treaty and to justice, fully satisfactory to the parties concerned, and distinguished from the unprincipled system of the German indemnities." The Prince's expected acceptance of the conditions finally proposed, namely, an annuity of 16,000*l.*, terminable at the King's pleasure, speedily arrived; and was announced by M. Fagel to Mr. Addington in the note which follows:—

"Dear Sir, Hague, 20th Nov. 1802.

"I have great satisfaction in transmitting to you the enclosed original letters, by which you will see that the Prince of Orange is fully satisfied with the arrangements, the outline of which is contained in your letter to me. I am happy thus to see an affair of so much importance to the House of Orange in a fair way of being speedily concluded to the entire satisfaction of that illustrious house.

"I am, &c. &c. H. FAGEL."

Still, however, the perplexed state of continental politics prevented that early termination of this business which M. Fagel anticipated; and it was not until the 25th of July, 1803, that the act passed which at length brought this tedious transaction to an end.

The King, in a private letter to Mr. Addington, noticed with much satisfaction what had been effected on this subject; and the Prince of Orange expressed his final acknowledgements to the latter in the subjoined note, with which the author closes his notice of

an affair, which, at this distance of time, derives, probably, its chief importance from the misrepresentations to which it has been subjected.*

"Frankfort sur le Mein, ce 17 7^{bre}, 1803.

"Ayant reçu l'Acte de Parlement par lequel une rente de 16,000*l.* est accordée à la Maison d'Orange, pour aussi longtemps qu'il plaira à sa Majesté Brittanique de la lui continuer; je n'ai pas voulu manquer de remercier votre Excellence, pour la part qu'elle a prise à la réussite de cette affaire, et pour faire obtenir à la Princesse mon épouse, la somme de 60,000*l.* Je prie votre Excellence d'être persuadé de la reconnaissance que j'en ai, et de la parfaite considération avec laquelle je suis, Monsieur, de votre Excellence le très-humble et très-obeissant serviteur,

"G. P. D'Orange."

The other subject, respecting which an accumulation of materials has been made, is the state of Ireland; on which topic, nothing has been inserted in this work since the appointment of Lord Redesdale as Lord Chancellor. Frequent and elaborate letters were addressed by that personage to Mr. Addington in the course of the summer, from which the following extracts have been selected.

* The diary of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 58., having represented this transaction in a manner very unfavourable towards Mr. Addington, two circumstances will here be stated which it is thought will be sufficient to convince the reader of the extreme incorrectness of his Lordship's account. First, then, the letter which the Princess of Orange addressed to M. Fagel on the *4th of July, 1802*, is represented by his Lordship to have been written in *July, 1801*, from which misdate the inference is obvious that his Lordship did not always make the entries in his diary at the time when the events which he relates occurred, a fact which greatly diminishes the value of his testimony. The second point to be noticed is, that Mr. Addington's letter, which Lord Malmesbury has censured as "ill suited to the rank of the Princess of Orange," was *not addressed to her Royal Highness at all, but to M. Fagel.*

The first, which is taken from a letter dated "Dublin, August 26th, 1802," is remarkable, as containing the earliest intimation to be found, in the Sidmouth papers, of the impending rebellion: —

"When I first came to this country, I was induced to form an opinion which I communicated to you, that it was approaching rapidly to a state of quiet. I am extremely sorry to say, that I fear I have led you into error in that respect; and I am particularly anxious to state this, because the parties who made the representations to which I have alluded do not seem willing to change their opinion. In truth, I believe, although the country is apparently quiet, yet the lower ranks are far from being quietly disposed, and that nothing but apprehension for the consequences keeps them from a different conduct. I think it fit that you should know this, and therefore be on your guard. I am far from attributing this disaffected spirit to difference in religious opinions, though that operates considerably. The prime mover of all the mischief is the original Jacobin spirit, of which you have had some symptoms in England. Here it pervades a great proportion of the lowest ranks, and some of those above the lowest. * * * The state of the Established Church in this country is a matter requiring your most serious consideration. It had long suffered from neglect, and is now suffering from other causes. Many parishes are without churches and resident clergymen. Cannot means be found to remedy this evil? Many of the great towns are much increased of late, but there has not been a corresponding increase of churches. Dublin even is in great want of them. The common people have no places in any of the churches. I am persuaded that the establishing some fund for building new churches would be of great benefit, especially if there were accommodations for the lower classes."

In another letter, of about the same date, his Lordship alludes to a rumour—

"That further concessions were to be made to the Roman Catholics, and particularly an establishment for their clergy.

I know not what your opinion may be on this subject, but as far as I can collect information, such a measure would be highly mischievous: one consequence must be, that this country never can become Protestant, and will shortly become almost wholly Roman Catholic; for, this point gained, every thing else will follow of necessity, and I think it decidedly preferable to grant every thing else and refuse this. * * * I think the supposed ground of policy on which this measure has been suggested is now entirely gone by. The priests have lost much of their influence on the lower classes, and conciliating them will operate little towards keeping the country quiet. * * * If a rebellion were to break out now, they would have other leaders than fanatical priests."

Whilst the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was thus expressing his objections to the rumoured grant to the Roman Catholic priesthood, the Presbyterian synod represented to Lord Castlereagh, through Dr. Black, the president, its ready acceptance of the increase which the government had recently made in the gratuity denominated "*regium donum.*" The letter, which is dated "Londonderry, July 4th, 1802," describes the proceedings of the synod, which had concluded its sittings on the preceding evening, in the following terms: —

"I may compare the close of the meeting to a calm evening after a tempestuous day. Affectionate and respectful addresses to his Majesty and the Lord Lieutenant were unanimously agreed to. In the last, his Excellency is warmly thanked for the communication of the intentions of his Majesty's confidential servants respecting an increase of *regium donum.* * * * The proceedings occupied four days, and the result justifies, most completely, my confidence in the loyalty and moderation of the great body of ministers, when supported by the confidence of government. * * * I will now only repeat the satisfaction of all good men at what his Majesty's

ministers have communicated, and the deep gratitude and esteem with which I am, Your Lordship's, &c. &c.

"ROBERT BLACK."

There is a valuable mass of materials on these important topics; but sufficient has already been produced to show the causes of anxiety which still existed in that distracted country, and the remedies which the King's confidential servants were devising for their removal. We will now proceed, therefore, to describe the proceedings of the second imperial parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The speech with which the King opened the session of parliament on the 23d of November, after making a most satisfactory report of the internal prosperity of the country, and of the state of the revenue, which would enable the government fully to provide for the public service without any considerable addition to the burdens of the people, alluded, with great and ominous caution, to the state of foreign affairs. His Majesty professed a sincere disposition for the maintenance of peace, but considered it incumbent to adopt those means of security best calculated to preserve it; nor was it possible for him, he added, "to lose sight of that established and wise system of policy which connected the interest of other states with our own." In the debate on the address of thanks, which was carried without any division, Mr. Addington, rising after Mr. Windham, replied to that gentleman's general declamation by a statement of special facts. "So far," he observed, "from the present establishment of the country being insufficient, the army was then double what it had been in 1784, the year after the previous

peace. No reduction had yet taken place in the infantry except in the disembodying the militia. The cavalry, indeed, had been diminished, but that arm of the service still remained double what it was in 1792. The naval establishment, which in 1786 numbered only 115 ships of war, now amounted to 207. In 1792 only 18,000 seamen were employed, now there were 46,000; then we had 23 sail of the line in commission, now 35." Mr. Addington then enlarged on the beneficial effects produced by the peace on the commerce, manufactures, and revenue of the country, and stated, "that since its conclusion our foreign export trade had increased four millions and a half; that the growing produce of the consolidated fund, which he had been thought too sanguine in estimating for the three quarters to the 5th of next January at 4,500,000*l.*, had already in only two quarters amounted to 3,800,000*l.*; and that the floating debt, which was 38,000,000*l.*, had already been reduced to 23,000,000*l.*, and by the 5th of next January would be little more than 14,000,000*l.*" He concluded by observing, that "whilst they hoped the best, it was proper to be prepared for the worst; that although the nation desired the continuance of peace, it was not afraid of war; and that dreadful as were the evils of the latter, they must not for a moment be brought into comparison with the independence or security of the empire, and the unsullied maintenance of the national honour."

On the following day, when the report of the address was brought up, Mr. Addington observed, that "there were some gentlemen who were in the habit of making exaggerated statements, and using language tending to war; others, on the contrary, seemed ready to

make any sacrifices for the maintenance of peace. Ministers would not follow the advice of either, but adopt a middle course, which should be at the same time firm and moderate."

The tone both of the King's speech and his Minister's explanation must have prepared the House for the first resolution proposed in the Committee of Supply on the 2d of December, for the employment of 50,000 seamen and marines during the ensuing year; and for the second, on the 8th of the same month, which assigned 129,000 men for the land service during the same period. To quote the words of Mr. Abbot's diary, "No divisions took place on either of those occasions; nor did the Opposition move any amendment upon the address. Mr. Fox and his friends supported the ministers."

The following statement of the Minister's financial arrangements is extracted from Lord Bexley's narrative already adverted to: —

"On the 10th of December, in a Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Addington opened the budget for the year 1803 in a speech which was received by the public at large with much approbation. Some further approaches had now been made towards a permanent peace establishment. The estimates for the army, navy, and ordnance, had been reduced from 25,738,000*l.*, the sum expended in 1802, to 15,157,000*l.*;" and, as Mr. Addington stated on the 23d of November, in reply to Mr. Elliot, "the total saving already resulting from the peace amounted to about twenty-five millions sterling annually." This, however, was still so great an excess beyond the charge of any former peace establishment, as to afford a prospect of further re-

ductions whenever the relations of amity with our late enemy should be more firmly established. Mr. Addington, however, judging from the subsisting state of our relations with France, strongly insisted on the necessity of keeping up, whatever might be the cost, such a force as would be adequate to meet any emergency which might arise. He was justified, he considered, in drawing a very favourable picture of the power and resources of the country, which was thus enabled, without inconvenience, to maintain such an establishment as would effectually support the national honour and interests. "We must not," he said, "attempt to compromise by endeavouring to reduce our expenditure to our revenue, but resolve to keep our revenue on a level with our necessary expenditure. In such a system alone could he see solid wisdom, or discover the probability of future honour and security." He then explained the particulars of his budget, which was distinguished by the remarkable circumstance that though a loan of ten millions was to be raised, it would not be necessary to provide for its charge by any new tax, the excess of the permanent taxes imposed in the earlier part of the year being sufficient to cover its amount. Mr. Addington's whole statement on this occasion was received with general satisfaction: it did not, however, escape the criticisms of those who, from various causes, were disposed to censure the acts of his administration. It was charged with being boastful, invidious to his predecessors in office, and materially erroneous in a part of its details.

"With respect to the *first* charge, it may justly be asserted that in the position in which Great Britain then stood as regarded her arrogant and encroaching neigh-

bour, Mr. Addington was not only justified but bound in duty, with a view to public impression both at home and abroad, to represent the state of the country as favourably as the facts of the case would fairly warrant: to the *second*, it may be answered that this speech contains no allusion to any act of any of Mr. Addington's predecessors; and that it was naturally to be inferred from it, that, in representing the improving state of the country, he meant to ascribe such improvement simply to the return of peace. It is, however, too probable that unfriendly insinuations were at this time gradually rendering Mr. Pitt indisposed to a just and candid view of the measures of the government, and contributed to the part he soon afterwards took when he returned to the House.* The friends of Lord Melville, who had been Treasurer of the Navy, were also offended by the compliment

* "Your mention of Mr. Addington's speech of the 10th of December, reminds me of a conversation I had some time afterwards with Charles Long, who told me that it had been so represented to Pitt as to put him very much out of humour. He was particularly offended by the expression, 'economical management of the navy,' which he thought invidious to Dundas."—*Letter from Lord Bexley to the Author, June* 14. 1845.

Whilst such was the impression which the speech made on Mr. Pitt, how different was its effect on his physician, Sir Walter Farquhar, who, in making an improved report of his patient's health to Mr. Addington on the 12th of December, expressed himself in the following terms:—"I cannot refrain from congratulating the Prime Minister upon the impression which his conduct has made upon the country in general, and particularly upon the electrical effect upon the public mind by his animating and impressive speech of Friday last. It has inspired confidence, and warmed every heart."

A note of the same date from Sir Edward Littlehales, informed Mr. Addington that his able and eloquent statement had afforded equal gratification in the sister kingdom of Ireland.

which Mr. Addington paid to the economical administration of the navy under Earl St. Vincent.

"The *third* charge, therefore, which accused Mr. Addington of erroneous statements in his budget, is the only one which requires any particular examination. It must be recollected, then, that this financial statement was framed during a peace, and that its accuracy wholly rested upon a supposition of the continuance of that state. Moreover, it will be found that the only item in this budget at all open to objection, is the estimate of the growing produce of the consolidated fund, which, as it related to the future, could not be otherwise than conjectural, and subject to contingencies. Mr. Addington stated to the House that the actual surplus of the three quarters ending on the previous 10th of October, was 5,884,000*l.*; and that if the produce of the fourth quarter should equal that of the preceding one, the whole surplus of the year would not be less than 7,845,000*l.* As, however, that sum greatly exceeded the produce of any former year, he should estimate it at 6,500,000*l*; and for the present take only a vote of 4,000,000*l.*

"Notwithstanding the caution manifested in this proceeding, Mr. Addington has been blamed for having formed his estimate upon the produce of only a single quarter; and he has also been accused of having overstated the revenue by no less a sum than 2,800,000*l.*, being the difference between the actual surplus of the year, and the sum to which Mr. Addington said it would amount if the produce of the fourth quarter should equal that of the third. This deficiency, however, was solely the result of the transition from a state of peace to one of war. Notwithstanding, how-

ever, this disadvantage, and the circumstance that the additional assessed taxes imposed at the commencement of the year produced no return during the first quarter, the actual surplus for the year amounted, after all, to 5,100,000*l.*, which was 1,100,000*l.* more than the sum for which he took credit in the vote of December 10th, and only 1,400,000*l.* less than the amount which he stated that he calculated upon in the event of a continuance of peace.

"That blessing, however, was denied; and before the conclusion of the financial year the impending return of war became evident, bringing with it the usual attendants—suspension of trade, depression of credit, and a falling off of revenue." *

The only remaining debate of general interest which occurred in the House of Commons before the Christmas recess was upon a bill brought in by Captain Markham, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, at the suggestion, it was understood, of Earl St. Vincent, for appointing commissioners to inquire into frauds and abuses committed in the naval department. This proposition gave birth to much discussion; and being supposed, though certainly, as far as Mr. Addington was concerned, most erroneously, to have been levelled against the preceding government, was unpalatable to the Lord Chancellor, as well as to several other members of the late or present administration. The commission was ultimately appointed; but its proceedings and results proved unfavourable to Mr. Addington's popularity, and tended to place him and Mr. Pitt in a still

* Mr. Abbot, alluding to this speech of Mr. Addington's, in his diary, observes, "that it was received with such general satisfaction that the funds rose in one day nearly five per cent."

more embarrassing position with respect to each other. It was, however, a strong proof of the integrity and disinterestedness of the Prime Minister, that he was willing to incur all this odium for what he considered the public benefit; and now, when prejudice and self-interest are silent on the matter, we ought not to withhold our approbation from the statesman who, by submitting the affairs of the noble charity of Greenwich to the inspection of commissioners, gave the first impulse to that spirit of investigation which has since rescued many of the charities of England from misapplication or mismanagement.

The House now adjourned for the Christmas recess. There were two features in the recent session which Mr. Addington's biographer cannot but regard as subjects both of public and private interest — the warm support which Mr. Sheridan gave to the Minister in parliament, and the secession of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Sheridan's assistance was spontaneous and disinterested: he neither received, nor, as far as the author can ascertain, expected any office or other return from Mr. Addington.* His accession appears to have been occasioned solely by respect for the Minister, and approbation of his measures and conduct; and from this period may be dated a cordial intimacy between the parties, not quite amounting perhaps to friendship, but far exceeding the bounds of common acquaintance, which survived all subsequent political

* Mr. Sheridan observed to the Minister one evening, after dining with him at Richmond Park, "My visits to you may possibly be misconstrued by my friends; but I hope you know, Mr. Addington, that I have an unpurchaseable mind."— *Family Recollections.*

revolutions, and terminated only with Mr. Sheridan's life. That gentleman used frequently, especially at a later period, to pay visits at Richmond Park, where the charms of his conversation, and his ready acquiescence in the quiet and regular habits of the family, never failed to insure him a hearty welcome.

The following anecdote of Lord Sidmouth's will tend further to explain the footing on which his Lordship and Sheridan stood towards each other: —

"There is no man," said Sheridan to me, "who has told me more painful truths than you have, and yet you will do me the justice to believe, that there is no one for whom I feel more respect and regard. I have too many irregularities in private life to reproach myself with, but I may safely say that my conscience is clear towards my country."

Nor was this by any means a solitary instance of the successful manner in which Mr. Addington's bland, frank, and liberal disposition, when by any accident brought into closer contact with his political opponents, not merely softened their hostility, but converted their feelings of disapprobation into those of attachment and regard. Thus, for instance, the celebrated Mr. Jekyll was an active, though ever a most honorable opponent, both of Mr. Pitt's and Mr. Addington's administrations; yet the author remembers with pleasure the long and delightful visits which that gentleman used to pay to Lord Sidmouth in the evening of their lives, their varied, though equally attractive powers of conversation, and the entire accordance of their sentiments on almost every subject.

The second remarkable feature of this short session, the absence of Mr. Pitt, is now approached with un-

feigned reluctance. It was ostensibly accounted for by the expediency of his remaining longer at Bath for the more perfect restoration of his health; in reality, however, it resulted from a determination to which he had recently arrived of withholding in future his promised assistance from Mr. Addington's administration.*

The progress of events, however, must not be anticipated: Mr. Pitt, although induced to take privately the first retrograde step by absenting himself from the debates, had as yet sought no explanation with Mr. Addington; and the latter, an entire stranger to intrigue or concealment, entertained so little suspicion of what was approaching, that, as soon as he was released from parliament, he requested Mr. Pitt, who was understood to be leaving Bath, to meet him on his return through town. It was the answer which he then received from Mr. Pitt that first opened his eyes to the real state of the case: that answer will now be presented; as also Mr. Addington's reply, in which he evidently alluded to the promise of support, by ap-

* The author's principal authority for making this statement is Mr. Pitt's own acknowledgement to Mr. Canning, as recorded by one who was with him at Bath at the time. "He had pledged himself," he said, "but *himself singly*, to advise and support the present ministry. This pledge he considered as solemnly binding, not redeemable by any lapse of time, nor ever to be cancelled without the *express consent* of Mr. Addington." (Lord Malmesbury's diary, vol. iv. p. 75.) Now although an extreme case might certainly have arisen, when it would have been Mr. Pitt's duty, for the sake of his country, to disregard any pledge however binding, it is scarcely credible that such a necessity could have arisen between the date of Mr. Pitt's friendly letter of the 10th of November, and the meeting of parliament on the 23d of the same month.

pealing to Mr. Pitt's justice, in conjunction with his friendship: —

"My dear Sir, Dropmore*, Thursday, Dec. 30th, 1802.

"I received your letter just before I left Rose's, from whence, by a slow progress, I arrived here yesterday, after calling at Park Place* on my way. I am going on to-morrow or next day to Long's, where I shall probably remain for two or three days, and shall, therefore, hardly be in town before the middle of the week. I hope then to have the opportunity of seeing you, and I defer till then saying any thing on the state and prospects of public affairs, on which I fear there are many points to which I cannot help looking forward with regret and anxiety. Yours affectionately,

"W. P."

"Richmond Park, December the 31st, 1802.

"My dear Sir,

"I received your letter this morning just as I was setting out for Windsor, from whence I returned about an hour ago. It is my intention to stay here till Wednesday, and I should be happy if you could give me a day in the interval. If it should be more convenient to you to meet me in town, I can stay there either Wednesday or Thursday, as may suit you best. On the former day there will be a levee, and on the latter a cabinet; immediately after each of which I shall return to this place, if I am not likely to see you by staying in town. On Friday, I mean to go for a day to the Priory.

* The seats respectively of Lords Grenville and Malmesbury, one the open, the other the secret opponent of Mr. Addington. The latter nobleman has recorded a very long conversation which he held with Mr. Pitt on the 29th of December, extremely unfriendly to Mr. Addington. The author possesses no record of what passed at Dropmore, from which place Mr. Pitt travelled as far as Cranford Bridge with Mr. Canning; but there can be little doubt that the former, during this visit, had his unfavourable impression of his friend increased, especially as regarded the speech on the budget, "which," according to Lord Bexley, "had been represented to him as derogatory to his own financial merits."—(Letter to the author, Sept. 2d, 1844.)

"Whatever may be your sentiments on public affairs, and of the conduct which ought to be pursued, I cannot doubt your wish to concur with me, and I have a firm reliance on your justice and friendship. Yours ever affectionately,

"H. A."

These, then, were the circumstances of the person who occupied the envied position of Prime Minister of England when the chimes announced the commencement of the eventful year 1803 — his dearest friend forsaking him, a small, but talented party, privately combined to undermine him, and the French government pursuing a system of gradual encroachment and aggression, which, unless speedily discontinued, must inevitably terminate in hostilities.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1803.

Mr. Hiley Addington made joint Paymaster of the Forces. — Mr. Pitt's Visits to Richmond Park. Mr. Pitt first sounded on the Subject of his Return to Office. Overture to Mr. Pitt through Lord Melville. Conference between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington at Bromley Hill. Correspondence between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington, respecting the former taking Office. Remarks and Letters of various Parties on this Transaction. Letter of Sir Richard Hill. Letter of the Rev. T. le Mesurier. Attempt of the Dean of Christchurch to accommodate Matters. Mr. Tierney appointed Treasurer of the Navy. Communication with Mr. Pitt through Lord Melville, prior to Mr. Patten's Motion on the 3d of June. Mr. Pitt moves the previous Question. Divisions on Mr. Pitt's and Mr. Patten's Motions. Letter of George III. on the Subject of the Divisions. Letter of Duke of Queensberry. Mr. Abbot's Account of Mr. Pitt's Proceedings to the End of the Session. Mr. Pitt's Conduct attacked in a Pamphlet called "Cursory Remarks." War of Pamphlets.

NOTWITHSTANDING the difficulties by which Mr. Addington's position was now surrounded, the earliest occurrence of the new year was of a gratifying nature. The death of Mr. Robinson, the Surveyor of Woods and Forests, enabled him to appoint his brother to the joint paymastership of the forces, in the place of Lord Glenbervie, who succeeded Mr. Robinson in the first-named office. Mr. Hiley Addington was, at the same time, created a privy counsellor, and elected to

the vacant representation of Harwich.* The manner in which the King, on the 30th of December, expressed his approbation of this appointment, was very satisfactory. "No one," he was pleased to say, "would be more agreeable to the King, as successor to the office of Surveyor of the Woods and Forests, than Mr. Hiley Addington; but should the joint paymastership suit him better, the King cannot object to the arrangement in favour of Lord Glenbervie, though having a preference for the first idea."

There was little leisure at this period for the indulgence of fraternal feelings; and Mr. Addington was speedily recalled to less agreeable duties. Two subjects now principally occupied his attention — his transactions with Mr. Pitt, and the state of the relations between this country and France. These the author has reserved for separate consideration, and it is with regret he finds, that the time for entering upon the former of them has now arrived.

The increasing difficulties which surrounded Mr. Addington's government having made him anxious to obtain some accession to its strength, he naturally directed his thoughts, in the first instance, towards his illustrious friend. He could not, indeed, be wholly ignorant of the unfavourable influence to which that

* This opportunity of bringing his brother forward in public life must have afforded especial delight to Mr. Addington, as it was impossible for relatives to be more attached to each other than these were. Mr. Hiley Addington, also, from his frequent and useful speaking in Parliament, his active attention to business, his excellent understanding, amiable character, and the kindness with which he was generally regarded, afforded his brother essential assistance in the various offices of importance which he successively held.

friend had recently been subjected; but "he had heard from Mr. Sullivan, that Mr. Pitt was now less disinclined to return to office, and had told Mr. Steele and Mr. Long, and others of Mr. Pitt's friends, that he (Mr. Addington) would be no obstacle to so desirable an event."* Under these circumstances, he availed himself of the opportunity afforded by Mr. Pitt's passing through London, on his return from Bath to Walmer, to communicate with him upon public affairs, and to endeavour to regain his confidence, and secure, if possible, his future co-operation. Accordingly, when Mr. Pitt informed him by note, on the 3d of January, of his arrival in town, he immediately invited him to pass the Wednesday and Thursday of that week at Richmond Park. This arrangement was carried into effect on the former day, much to the annoyance of Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Canning†, who appear to have apprehended the consequences which might result from it. On Thursday, however, Mr. Pitt took his departure somewhat unexpectedly, leaving behind him the following explanatory note: —

"My dear Sir, Richmond Park, Jan. 6th, 1803.

"I had totally forgot last night that I had made an engagement to-day of a sort that I cannot postpone, as it is to finish business which must be settled previously to finally giving over the possession of Hollwood, for which the purchaser has been for some time waiting. I am very sorry that this circumstance obliges me to give up the party here. I will take my chance of finding you in Downing Street on Saturday, as

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* Mr. Abbot's "Minutes of Conversations with Mr. Addington in 1803." These are contained in a separate book from the "Diary," and appear to have been carefully revised by the writer.

† Lord Malmesbury's Diary, vol. iv. p. 163.

you may probably stop there in your way back from the Priory. Ever affectionately yours,

"W. P."

This led to an invitation from Mr. Addington to accompany him to Richmond Park, on the succeeding Saturday, which Mr. Pitt declined, but in the most friendly terms, "having promised to dine in town with Sir Walter Farquhar." He did call, however, in Downing Street, as Mr. Addington informed his brother, on the Saturday, "when the conversation was extremely comfortable and satisfactory," and promised to revisit Richmond Park on the Sunday se'nnight. He fulfilled this engagement, and three days afterwards repeated the visit; as is shown by the following extract from a note which Mr. Addington addressed to his brother on the 21st of January: — "Pitt dined with me on Wednesday the 18th, having dined and slept at the White Lodge, on the preceding Sunday: he does not look well, but his strength is evidently improved, and his spirits and appetite are good." It will appear in the sequel*, that the apprehensions which these amicable conferences between the two friends excited in the minds of those who desired to keep them asunder were not ill-founded, and that Mr. Addington availed himself of the occasion to sound Mr. Pitt on the subject of his "return to an official situation," and derived from "some expressions which he dropped" sufficient encouragement to induce him subsequently to intrust Lord Melville with a special commission to Walmer on the subject. In short, ancient feelings were now fast reviving, and

* Mr. Addington's letter to Mr. Pitt of April 18th, 1803.

would soon, probably, have regained their former strength had not Mr. Pitt put an end to this personal intercourse, and exposed himself to other influences, by retiring to Walmer. From this point, the author will continue the narrative in the words of Mr. Abbot's diary, merely substituting from the Sidmouth papers the original documents to which that gentleman refers: — "Mr. Pitt stayed on at Walmer during February and March. In March, Lord Melville came to town; and after a conversation with Mr. Addington, conveyed from him to Walmer his assent to form a junction with Mr. Pitt, and other parties, who approved of the leading measures of the existing administration." Mr. Pitt's reply to this overture was made in the following letter, which at his dictation, Lord Melville wrote to Mr. Addington: —

To the Right Honourable Henry Addington.

"Walmer Castle, March 22d, 1803.

"My dear Sir,

"I arrived here on Sunday, and found Mr. Pitt much improved in point of health. He was alone, and there was no interruption in conversing with him on the various topics touched upon in my interview with you on Friday last. As matter of private gratification, Mr. Pitt has the reverse of any wish to return to official situation; and if the present administration prove themselves competent to carry on the government with reasonable prospect of success, and are determined afterwards to adhere to those leading principles of foreign and domestic policy which he has so long considered essential, his wishes to be able to support them out of office are precisely the same as they were at their first formation. He does not, however, disguise from me that many things have occurred, both in relation to their transactions with foreign powers (so far as he has the means of judging of them)

and with regard to the financial operations and statements of the treasury, as to have given him sincere concern; and if it were not under the circumstances of the present critical moment of the country, he doubts how far, considering the connexion he has had for these many years with its financial affairs, he was at liberty to refrain so long from stating to the public the fatal errors which he is satisfied exist in the statement made with regard to the amount of the national revenue compared with the charges upon it. As things now stand, he is induced, from all these considerations, for the present, at least, to adhere to the resolution of continuing his residence where he is, and refraining from taking part in the discussions of parliament.

"I did not conceal from him the idea you mentioned, of his returning to a share of the government with a person of rank and consideration at the head of it perfectly agreeable to him, and even specified the person you had named.* But there was no room for any discussion on that part of the subject, for he stated at once, without reserve or affectation, his feelings with regard to any proposition founded on such a basis. The uncertain state of his health makes him still doubt how far, in any case, he could be justified in undertaking a lead in public affairs, under the difficulties now existing or impending. The moment of a negotiation still in suspense he considers in every view unfit for his taking part; but, in any event, nothing could induce him to come forward except an urgent sense of public duty, and a distinct knowledge that his services (such as they may be) are wished and thought essential both in *the highest quarter*, and by all those with whom (in consequence of any arrangement that might be formed on that ground) he might have to act confidentially. He is firmly of opinion that he could not, on this supposition, have any chance of answering his own ideas of being useful to the country in one of the great points on which he lays a principal stress, but by returning to the management of its

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* Note in Mr. Addington's handwriting: — "The Earl of Chatham," Mr. Pitt's own brother.

finances. Besides this consideration, he stated, not less pointedly and decidedly, his sentiments with regard to the absolute necessity there is, in the conduct of the affairs of this country, that there should be an avowed and real minister possessing the chief weight in council and the principal place in the confidence of the King. In that respect there can be no rivality or division of power. That power must rest in the person generally called the First Minister; and that minister ought, he thinks, to be the person at the head of the finances. He knows, to his own comfortable experience, that notwithstanding the abstract truth of that general proposition, it is no ways incompatible with the most cordial concert and mutual exchange of advice and intercourse amongst the different branches of executive departments; but still, if it should come unfortunately to such a radical difference of opinion that no spirit of conciliation or concession can reconcile, the sentiments of the Minister must be allowed and understood to prevail, leaving the other members of administration to act as they may conceive themselves conscientiously called upon to act under such circumstances. During the last administration such a collision of opinion, I believe, scarcely ever happened, or, at least, was not such as the parties felt themselves obliged to push to extremities; but still it is possible, and the only remedy applicable to it, is in the principle which I have explained.

"In a conversation of two days, which involved in it the discussion of such a variety of topics, it is impossible to give you more than an abstract or very general outline of the heads of our conversation. I have made it merely a recital, not intermixed with any comments, opinions, or suggestions of my own. You expressed a wish to hear from me without any delay, and I trust the explanation I have given to you is sufficient to convey to you such a view of the subject as may enable you to draw your own conclusions, and regulate your own determinations. I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours, sincerely and affectionately,

"MELVILLE."*

* This letter, and indeed the whole tenour of the correspondence which subsequently ensued between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington,

This letter was, at all events, sufficiently explicit, and Mr. Addington now discovered that Mr. Sullivan's representations and his own conclusions were both erroneous, and that the only mode of securing Mr. Pitt's promised co-operation was by conceding to him that position which, only two years before, Mr. Pitt had almost compelled him to assume upon his own voluntary relinquishment of it. Mr. Addington had not expected, when endeavouring only to strengthen the government, to be thus required to dissolve it; and when it is considered that, as Minister, he was conscious of no error against the public interests; that he retained the perfect confidence of the King and the parliament; that during his administration the country had enjoyed unusual prosperity, and the finances been placed in a most satisfactory condition, there were, assuredly, no reasonable grounds for the suspicions so incessantly repeated by a small section of the preceding government, that he would not be found equal to the crisis, and that Mr. Pitt was the only man competent to conduct the impending war. The author finds no notice of the

fully refutes a mis-statement into which Lord Melville inadvertently fell, in a letter which he addressed to Lord Eldon on the 29th of January, 1807. (See Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 19.) His Lordship there states, in mentioning an attempt which Mr. Pitt made, "when Mr. Addington was at the head of the government, to break the phalanx of opposition, that all that Mr. Pitt stipulated as the conditions of his return to power, was the liberty of proposing his two former colleagues, Lords Spencer and Grenville, to the King, to return to office." The reader will shortly find, that the conditions which Mr. Pitt required were nothing less than the unconditional surrender, by the King himself and the existing ministers, of the government into his hands, with power to remodel or wholly change it at his will.

transactions between the 22d of March, when Lord Melville's letter was written, and the 10th of April, the date of the interview between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington, at Bromley Hill; but it appears from Mr. Abbot's diary, that "Lord Melville, on his return from Walmer, proposed that Mr. Pitt should be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Addington be removed to the House of Lords, with an appointment as Speaker. To this, however, Mr. Addington objected*, preferring a regular office to a provision of that nature; and consequently Mr. Long, who either was at Walmer at the time, as stated by Lord Malmesbury, or, according to Mr. Abbot, went down for the purpose, was employed to carry on a further communication with Mr. Pitt on the subject. On that occasion, as Mr. Long was getting into his chaise to return to town, Lord Grenville drove up to the door, on a visit to Mr. Pitt; and it will shortly be seen that Mr. Addington ever afterwards attributed Mr. Pitt's altered feelings towards himself to the influence exerted by his Lordship at that period. This effect, however, was not then suspected, and Mr. Long returned to town with a report of Mr. Pitt's favourable disposition, calculated to keep alive the hope that the negotiation, after all, would end satisfactorily. This induced Mr. Addington, who had determined that no sacrifices personal to himself, short of the total dissolution of the government, should stand in the way of Mr. Pitt's incorporation into the ministry, to seek an interview with him, which object was shortly afterwards effected by their passing the 10th

* Mr. Abbot's narrative.

and 11th of April together at the house of their mutual friend, Mr. Long, at Bromley Hill. "The 10th of April," observed Mr. Abbot, to whose minutes we now return, "brought matters to a conference. The conversation was opened by Mr. Pitt, who said it was indispensable that Lord Melville, Lord Spencer, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Windham, should be of the cabinet. There was to be a general sweep, and the changes must be by the King's desire, and with the recommendation of the King's present confidential servants. On Monday the 11th, Mr. Addington came away, giving no hopes of his acceding to such an arrangement, but promising to communicate with his colleagues on the subject." The above condensed account of what passed at Bromley Hill, is fully confirmed by the correspondence which now ensued between Mr. Addington and Mr. Pitt, and which was commenced by the former in the following manner*:—

"My dear Sir, Downing Street, April 12th, 1803.

"There is to be a meeting of the cabinet to-morrow at Lord Chatham's, when I propose mentioning the subject of our conversations at Bromley Hill. I think it, however, incumbent upon me to acknowledge, that after the best consideration which I have been able to give to the proposed arrangement, my opinion respecting it remains unaltered. But if I could justify the recommendation of it upon public grounds, the only honourable course I could pursue would be to concur in the sacrifices it would require, and to put myself

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* The whole of the succeeding letters are copied from the original documents; those addressed by Mr. Addington to Mr. Pitt having been most obligingly lent to the author by the representatives of the latter. They are all numbered and endorsed in Mr. Pitt's own handwriting.

entirely out of the question; *and this I should do with the utmost readiness and the most perfect satisfaction.* I will only add, that the objections to what has been suggested respecting the Speakership of the House of Lords* appear to me to be insurmountable under any circumstances, and I am convinced that they would appear so to you upon farther consideration.

"I have here expressed only my own sentiments, and I am very sorry it was not in my power to write to you earlier in the day. With those of my colleagues you shall be made acquainted either to-morrow afternoon or on Thursday morning. Indeed, if I hear nothing to the contrary from you, I will endeavour to be at Bromley Hill by one o'clock on Thursday, but I must return to dinner. In the mean time I shall entertain a hope, that you may not feel it necessary to adhere, in its full extent, to the proposition which you have made. I am ever, my dear Sir, affectionately yours,

"H. A."†

The personal disinterestedness conspicuous in this letter produced no change in Mr. Pitt's determination,

* This refers to a suggestion by Mr. Pitt to create a new office in the House of Lords expressly for Mr. Addington.

† Subjoined to the copy of this letter is the following important note in the handwriting of Lord Sidmouth. His Lordship must have added it many years afterwards, as the characters of the writing are those of his declining life: —

"A material change had taken place in Mr. Pitt's mind after Lord Melville, and even after Mr. Long, left Walmer, and previous to the meeting at Bromley Hill. During that interval Lord Grenville went down to Walmer. The points to which Mr. Pitt now attached the greatest importance, next to the change in his own situation, were the removal of Lord St. Vincent and Lord Hawkesbury from their respective offices: he also considered the removal of Lord Pelham and Lord Hobart as indispensable."

These removals, with that of Mr. Addington himself, would have exactly made room for Mr. Pitt and the four friends he mentioned at Bromley Hill.

as was expressed in the following brief and unsatisfactory reply: —

"My dear Sir, Bromley Hill, April 13th, 1803.

"I shall certainly be at your orders at the time you mention to-morrow, if you should continue anxious to see me; but I can have nothing to add to the explicit statement I have already made to you of my general ideas; and as you already know *the only grounds* on which I can listen to any proposition on the subject on which we conversed, I trust you will not think it necessary to give yourself any further trouble upon it, unless, after consulting your colleagues, you feel it advisable, *on those grounds*, to recommend that step being taken from the highest quarter which I have thought it my duty to represent as the indispensable preliminary to my entering on the formation of any plan of arrangement. As my opinion on this point cannot admit of alteration, it would be fruitless to resume our discussion, if you entertain, on your part, any idea of its proceeding on any other basis.

"I am, my dear Sir, sincerely yours,

"W. Pitt."

Mr. Addington, it is scarcely necessary to observe, did *not* go to Bromley Hill, but contented himself with announcing to Mr. Pitt the opinion of the cabinet in the following words: —

"My dear Sir, Downing Street, April 14th, 1803.

"It is necessary, notwithstanding the intimation contained in your last letter, that I should acquaint you with the sentiments of his Majesty's confidential servants on the subject of our conversations at Bromley Hill. I stated to them the motives which could alone induce you to think of returning to office, and the outline of the only plan upon which, as it appeared to you, an arrangement could be advantageously made. They all expressed in the strongest manner the satisfaction which they should derive from the union of those who had concurred in opinion respecting the leading measures of government; but they feel that what appears to them to be

due to the interests of the public, as they might be affected by the declared opinions of some of those * who were proposed to be comprehended in such an arrangement, would not allow them to give their advice that steps should be taken towards carrying it into effect.

"I am, my dear Sir, sincerely yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

To this Mr. Pitt returned the following answer: —

"My dear Sir, Bromley Hill, April 14th, 1803.

"I need only acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and am yours sincerely, W. PITT."

On the subsequent day however, to obviate the possibility of any misapprehension on certain points, and fearing, as one who was at that time in his confidence has observed, that "if the business were to break off there, Mr. Addington's last letter, which was, in fact, a minute of cabinet, would be the only voucher to produce †," Mr. Pitt expressed his sentiments at greater length.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Addington.

"My dear Sir, Bromley Hill, April 15th, 1803.

"On receiving your letter of yesterday, I abstained from doing more than acknowledging it, because I felt unwilling to make any observations on a subject which I considered (as I still do) as brought to a decided issue. But on reflecting on some passages in that letter, I am not sure whether they do not give reason to think that you have, in some respects, understood what has passed between us in a different light from that in which I viewed it, and in which I hoped it

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* Note in Lord Sidmouth's handwriting, "viz. Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham."

† Lord Malmesbury's Diary, vol. iv. p. 181.

had been distinctly placed by the whole tenour of our conversations.

"I refer to those expressions which seem to imply that you considered yourself as authorised to state to your colleagues a specific and positive proposition as made by me, and as containing the outline of a plan of arrangement which it was for them to consider whether they ought to recommend to his Majesty to carry into effect. I certainly do not consider myself as having made to you *any* proposition on the subject. Our interview originated, as I conceive, in a strong wish expressed by yourself, that I might be induced to return to my former situation in the King's service. On this point I stated that the only ground on which I could think myself called upon to give any positive answer to such a proposition, or to say any thing that could be in any degree binding with respect to the details of any arrangement connected with it, was, that of receiving some direct previous intimation of his Majesty's wish to that effect, together with full authority to form, for *his Majesty's consideration*, a plan of arrangement in *any* manner I thought best for his service, *as well out of those who were in the former*, as *those who are in his present government*. I added, that the whole and every part of such plan, when submitted to his Majesty, must of course depend on his approbation or rejection; that nothing could, in any instance, be so adverse to my sense of duty and propriety, as to press, for a moment, any point that might not be consistent with his Majesty's opinion and inclination; but that in case of any such objection, it must be open to me to judge, whether it did not, in my opinion, render it impossible for me to engage in his Majesty's service? With respect to my colleagues in the former government, I also stated, that until I was enabled, in consequence of such previous authority from his Majesty, to make them a distinct proposal, I could neither be authorised to state, nor could in fact expect to know, what would be their determination upon it. In all our subsequent conversations that had any reference to detail, I wished you to understand that I could only state to you the outline of my present ideas of such an arrangement, as the circumstances appeared to me to require; and in order to

enable you to judge how far in your present situation you felt it to be your duty to recommend to his Majesty to honour me with the intimation of his pleasure, on which any proceeding must be founded; and, finally, in proceeding to explain these ideas, I certainly apprised you in the strongest manner of my intention to include, in any plan of arrangement which I might submit to his Majesty, former colleagues of mine (in case they consented), to whose opinions on the measures of government your letter undoubtedly refers. You will perceive, therefore, from this explanation, that it does not, in the smallest degree, tend to vary the grounds on which the objections of yourself and your colleagues to the ideas I entertain appear from your letter to be formed. Indeed, no consideration would have induced me to trouble you with it, if I thought it calculated to produce such an effect; much less, if it could lead to the probability of reviving between us a discussion with respect to the object which was in view, which I consider as now finally and absolutely closed. My only motive has been the desire of endeavouring to prevent any possible misunderstanding with respect to what has passed, in case it should ever become necessary hereafter to refer to any part of the transaction.

"I am, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

"W. PITT."

Mr. Addington, after showing the above document to Lords Melville and Castlereagh*, addressed the following letter to Mr. Pitt in reply:—

"My dear Sir, Downing Street, April 18th, 1803.

"I am sorry that it has not been possible for me to return an earlier answer to your letter, which I received late on Friday night. You must forgive me for saying, that if you had not discouraged my proposed visit to Bromley Hill on Thursday, you might, perhaps, have been saved the trouble of writing it. You have, however, I find, been since informed that there had been no misunderstanding on the points to

* Mr. Abbot's minutes.

which you particularly refer, and that the communication was made to my colleagues in the manner you wished and was entitled to expect.

"You say that you 'do not consider yourself as having made to me *any* proposition on the subject, and that our interview at Bromley Hill originated, as you conceive, in a strong wish expressed by me that you might be induced to return to your former situation in the King's service.' It is certainly true that you originated no proposition; but some expressions which dropped from yourself at the close of our last conversation in January, and some information which reached me through a most respectable channel*, led me to believe, that your view of the state of public affairs might induce you to conquer your personal unwillingness to return to an official situation, provided you understood that such was the wish entertained in the highest quarter, and by his Majesty's confidential servants. I accordingly endeavoured to ascertain your sentiments upon this subject as soon as possible, and it cannot be necessary for me to say, that there never has been a moment, in which I should not have been ready, and anxious, to promote to the utmost of my power the accomplishment of such an object. You were, however, unexpectedly and unavoidably detained at Walmer; and till I learnt that Lord Melville was on the point of paying you a visit there, no favourable opportunity occurred of making the communication. His Lordship informed me, by a letter from Walmer, that it was your opinion, that you could not be of essential service, except by returning to your former situation in the King's government; and that 'nothing could induce you to come forward, but a distinct knowledge that your services, such as they may be, are wished, and thought essential, both in the highest quarter, and by all those with whom, in consequence of any arrangement that might be formed on that ground, you might have to act confidentially;' and his Lordship afterwards stated, in conversation, that you had no wish for any material change, but such as might be necessary for an arrangement which was mentioned by his Lordship, as I understood, at your sug-

* The Right Hon. John Sullivan.

gestion, respecting myself; and this, with his Majesty's approbation, I had reason to believe, might be carried into effect, consistently with the consideration due from me to my colleagues. I told his Lordship, that, to an arrangement of the description, and on the footing which he had stated, *there should be no obstacle on my part;* that I had not a wish for any official situation whatever, and I added, in consequence of something that had fallen from Lord Melville, that I could not accept of any provision.

"You state that, in the event of being called upon from the highest quarter, you should expect to be authorised 'to form for his Majesty's consideration a plan of arrangement, in any manner you thought best for his service, *as well out of those who were in the former, as those who are in his present government;*' and in another part of your letter, you acknowledge that you 'apprised me in the strongest manner of your intention to include in any plan of arrangement, which you might submit to his Majesty, former colleagues of yours (in case they consented), to whose opinions on the measures of government my letter of the 14th undoubtedly refers.' Upon this, I have only to remark, that his Majesty's servants did not think it proper or justifiable, under the present circumstances, to promote a course of proceedings which had for its object, to new-model, reconstruct, and in part to change the government, instead of strengthening it, as had been suggested, by the union of those, who had concurred in opinion respecting its leading measures; and that, considering what had been the declared opinions, and the conduct in parliament, of some of those whom it was proposed to comprehend in the intended plan of arrangement, they could not, consistently with what appeared to them to be due to the interests of the public, and to their own characters, give their advice, that steps should be taken to carry it into effect. You repeat, what you distinctly stated at Bromley Hill, that 'nothing could, in any instance, be so adverse to your sense of duty and propriety, as to press, for a moment, any point that might not be consistent with his Majesty's opinion and inclination.' But the reservation with which this declaration was accompanied appeared to the King's servants to lead to possible consequences (to say the least),

which they did not think it consistent with their duty to have any share in incurring the hazard of producing.

"I will only add, that I am unwilling to advert particularly to the words you introduce towards the concluding part of your letter, 'in case they consented,' but I am sure you will recollect the opinion which you fairly expressed to me on this point; though you certainly did not say, whether or not that opinion was founded on any communication with the persons in question.

"I have thought it right to say thus much in consequence of your letter, and I have really found it difficult to avoid troubling you more at length. I remain, my dear Sir, sincerely yours, "HENRY ADDINGTON."

To the above explanation Mr. Pitt replied from "High Wycomb, on the 21st of April," in the following terms:—

"My dear Sir,

"Having taken the first moment in my power to state to you, by my letter of the 15th, my view of what had passed between us, and to recapitulate the substance of the sentiments I wished to convey, little more can remain for me, on any occasion, than to refer to that statement. There are, however, two or three points in your letter of the 18th (which only reached me here *last night*), on which I wish to make some remark. I am hardly aware for what purpose you refer to the short conversation which passed between us in January; but I am confident that you cannot consider any part of it as in any degree weakening or disqualifying the statement, that no proposition on the subject lately in question was ever made by me. That conversation was itself begun on your part; and I understood you to express in it an earnest wish (though certainly a vague and indefinite one) that, if circumstances should appear to require it, I might be induced again to accept my former situation. The substance of what I said was, I believe, that I considered any thing of that sort as out of the question at that moment; but that I by no means wished you to suppose that I had determined at all events to decline such a proposal, if any crisis of difficulty

should arrive in which I might be called upon by his Majesty, and was satisfied that my services were thought necessary both by his Majesty and his principal servants.

"With respect to the very unexpected proposal which I afterwards received through Lord Melville on his coming to Walmer, his letter from thence speaks for itself, and contains the *whole* of the sentiments which I wished to be stated to you, on my part, in answer. I have very little occasion to observe on the reasons which you assign as having operated on the minds of your colleagues in forming their opinion, in consequence of what had passed between us, further than to state, that I certainly never had any idea of forming an accession to strengthen the present government; but expected (as I have repeatedly explained) to be called upon to form, for his Majesty's consideration, a new plan of arrangement, in which I undoubtedly wished it to be understood that a very large proportion of his present servants would be included. With respect to other persons with whom I had formerly acted, and whom I equally expressed my wish to include, I can only repeat to you, that whatever opinion you might understand me to have formed of the probability of their consenting to take part in such an arrangement, I certainly stated to you, in distinct terms, 'that until I should be enabled, in consequence of previous authority from his Majesty, to make them a distinct proposal, I could neither be authorised to state, nor could, in fact, expect to know, what would be their determination upon it.' Having stated thus much on these points, I have now only to express my strong wish, that if you have thought or should think it proper (as I imagine must unavoidably be the case) to lay before his Majesty an account of what has passed on this occasion, you may think it right also to submit to him both this letter and my former of the 15th. If you should feel any objection to doing so, I hope, in that case, you will have the goodness to apprise me, that I may consider in what other mode I may endeavour, most respectfully, to bring under his Majesty's observation what I am anxious should be considered as containing at least my view of this transaction. I am, my dear Sir, your faithful and obedient servant,

"W. PITT."

To this communication Mr. Addington, on the same evening, returned the following explanation and reply: —

"My dear Sir, Downing Street, April 21st, 1803.

"I received your letter between six and seven o'clock this evening, and am sorry that mine did not reach you before you left town. It was written on Monday evening, and was sent to Baker Street on Tuesday, as soon as it had been copied; but was returned to me as I was going into the House of Commons yesterday in the afternoon, with the information that you had set out for Lord Carrington's before it was delivered in Baker Street. One of the reasons which led me to refer to what had passed in the month of January, was to show that the disposition which occasioned the communication through Lord Melville was not created by recent occurrences; and I must add, that the idea which I entertained *at that time* was not that of your returning to your former situation, but precisely what was suggested for your consideration through Lord Melville. It was not confined to myself; but was communicated, previous to the meeting of parliament in February, to some of our friends, particularly to the Chancellor, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and the Attorney General. I will only add, that, having received your permission, I will not fail to lay your letters, together with my own, before the King; and if any eligible mode should occur to you of making the communication from yourself, I hope you will have no hesitation in resorting to it. I am, my dear Sir, your faithful and obedient servant,

"Henry Addington."

Mr. Pitt addressed two more letters to Mr. Addington, dated on the 22d and 24th of April, requesting him to lay all the communications which had passed between them, together with Lord Melville's letter from Walmer on the same subject, before the King, which Mr. Addington immediately promised to do; adding, that "he could not give a stronger proof of

his readiness to attend to Mr. Pitt's wishes, than by consenting to lay before his Majesty Lord Melville's letter, though it contained sentiments which could not but be repugnant to his (Mr. Addington's) feelings, and to the justice of which he could by no means assent."

We now return to the minutes of Mr. Abbot: — "Mr. Pitt retired to Walmer, his conduct in the whole transaction being much disapproved of by Lord Chatham, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and others.* "On the 20th of April I saw Lord Redesdale, who had been at Bromley Hill on the 14th and 15th, when Mr. Pitt wrote his letter to Mr. Addington. He was quite satisfied that Mr. Pitt had gradually shifted his ground in the transaction, and from a willingness to support, had ended in a desire to subvert, *being overborne by others.* His Lordship told Mr. Pitt that his coming in with the Grenville party would necessarily create an apprehension that the Catholic measure was about to be resumed. Lord Redesdale believed, on the whole, that Mr. Pitt was heartily glad that his own desire had failed."

The author abstains from expressing his own opinion on this negotiation. Duty, however, requires that he should collect the suffrages of the contemporaries of these, now unhappily, *rival* statesmen, as they are presented to notice in the papers before him.

The approval of Mr. Addington's conduct was so strongly manifested in the highest quarter, that those

* "Lord Chatham always declared himself highly satisfied with my conduct towards his brother on this trying occasion."—*MS. Notes by Lord Sidmouth.*

opposed to the Minister surmised that he must have told his story in a manner too favourable to himself*, — a meanness which he was wholly incapable of committing. The opinion of the Duke of York is shown in the following brief extract from Mr. Abbot's diary: — "April 20th. The Dean of Christchurch called on me. He had heard the whole, and had talked fully with the Duke of York, who said that Mr. Addington's conduct had been perfectly proper throughout. His Royal Highness thought things might yet come about, but the Dean thought not."

A letter from Mr. Golding, after informing Mr. Addington that the meeting at Bromley Hill had excited much observation and comment at Reading, reported a characteristic remark which Sir William Scott had made on the subject, whilst enjoying his favourite recreation of watching the dragging of a fish pond in Mr. Golding's park on the preceding day. "There could be no adjustment," he observed, "between the parties, from the numbers of their respective adherents; *there was not pasture enough for all.*" The sentiments expressed by Sir Richard Hill in his letter on this occasion were so creditable to that amiable and respected county member, and so indicative of the state of feeling entertained by the honourable class of gentlemen to which he belonged, that the author cannot refrain from inserting it in full.

"Nottingham Place, April 21st, 1803.

"Dear and much honoured Sir,

"Every one who knows you, and loves his country, wishes for your continuance at the head of public affairs. The

* Lord Malmesbury's Diary.

voice of the nation is with you; the people look up to you. Nothing can prove this more certainly than that every report of your quitting your present situation causes an immediate depression of the funds, and *vice versâ*. That you have enemies, however, is without doubt; and should they unhappily prevail, with your overthrow that of the nation would be effected, and such a system let in as would make every feeling heart tremble.

"Now to preserve our present blessings, and to enjoy those greater ones which we may anticipate under an able, virtuous, pacific, economical administration, it must be the anxious wish of all good men that your hands should be strengthened by the accession of persons of influence and abilities, on whatsoever side of the House they may sit; and among these I know there are not a few who are far from being hostile to you. The time approaches when your strength in the House will be tried on some great national questions, and if your phalanx should not prove powerful, motion after motion will probably follow one another. The Grenvilles will be all against you, and perhaps a few of the late administration, who have long been forming cabals and parties. The old opposition will hardly know how to act. Neither Mr. Fox nor his friends will like you to appear weaker than your opponents; on the contrary, I know, on no bad authority, that it would much grieve them to see this.† * * * It is true coalitions have generally been scouted, and perhaps not without cause; but on the present occasion, a coalition with some principal characters of the old opposition would by no means be a forced or an unnatural one. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt were once closely united. * * * After having so long filled the chair in a manner which gained you universal applause, you have now (under Providence) been the instrument of giving us peace; and in this you have had Mr. Fox's cordial support, though you have been more cautious in trusting to the assurances of France than perhaps he would have been. I am aware that your cautions, however commendable, may be brought against you; but on this ground you

† "April 29th, Vansittart told me that the old opposition had made advances to Mr. Addington through the Duke of Northumberland."— *Mr. Abbot's Narrative.*

will be able to give a satisfactory answer, and you would probably have been much more blamed had you taken no notice of the French preparations for war. Upon the whole, I am persuaded there never was a time when two parties, who have on former occasions opposed each other, would find less difficulty in uniting to save the empire than the present; and certain it is, there never was a more critical conjuncture for the exercise of combined great abilities. I have the honour to be, truly, dear Sir, yours, &c. &c.

"RICHARD HILL."

As the preceding letter shows how this transaction was viewed by independent members of parliament, so the one which follows, from the Rev. Thomas Le Mesurier, explains the sentiments of the Minister's intimate friends:—

"I fear," that gentleman wrote on the 21st of April, "what you stated from the beginning respecting Pitt will prove true, that whilst he continues aloof he will be worked upon either to go into opposition, or to take a line scarcely less prejudicial. What has just passed must, I think, decide his conduct, and if he does not directly oppose you, it will only be out of regard to his consistency, which would suffer from his joining with men whose sentiments respecting the peace have been so much at variance with his own. But he will and must gradually identify himself with the Grenvilles. The very consciousness that he has not acted towards you with that openness and confidence which you have shown to him will estrange him from you. * * * You will, no doubt, suffer much from such conduct. Nothing is so calculated to wound the heart as thus to be parted from old and dear connexions; to find distrust and unkindness where we had so much reason to expect support and confidence. But such is the condition of public life; and you have, I am persuaded, made up your mind to this, as you did to other painful sacrifices. It is on such occasions that the firmness of a man must support him; and I doubt not, that whenever opposed to Pitt, you will at once show all the respect due to

old friendship and great merit, and at the same time feel what is due to yourself, and know how to maintain your own dignity and independence. Nor do I conceive that you will find this so difficult a task, taking your measures, as you will, with judgment, and acting with integrity and zeal. The nation is now less disposed to think that a government cannot stand unless supported by a continued display of dazzling eloquence. You will not, however, be deficient in that respect in the House of Commons; and if you have not the same advantage in the other House, yet if your measures are good they will speak for themselves; more particularly if the Almighty will give you success at the outset. * * *

Believe me, &c. &c.

"THOS. LE MESURIER."

The apprehension expressed in the foregoing letter, that Mr. Pitt would either join the opposition, or take a line not less prejudicial, was speedily realised in the course he pursued on the 3d of June, when Colonel Patten moved a resolution of censure on the ministers, for their conduct in the negotiation with France. Before this event, however, another fruitless attempt was made to reconcile the rival leaders, which shall be related in the words of Mr. Abbot, one of the parties in the transaction:—

"May 27th. The Dean of Christchurch, Dr. Jackson, came to state that, from various circumstances, he was led to believe Mr. Pitt to be at present disposed to an arrangement for entering into administration, without bringing with him the Grenvilles, Canning, &c. &c. It was therefore wished that Mr. Addington might countenance a proposition on the part of the Duke of Portland, to sound Mr. Pitt on his present disposition to resume his office of prime minister, first, making Mr. Addington Secretary of State for the Home Department, and, secondly, disclaiming the Grenvilles, so that Mr. Addington's removal should be 'non fuga sed profectio.' I communicated all this to Mr. Addington, who was not a stranger to a great deal of it, but declined wholly to make any advance whatever after what had passed at Easter,

and the experience of all he had suffered from unkindness and injustice."

The diary then alludes to Mr. Tierney's appointment to the treasurership of the navy, which had just been announced (June 1st); and observes, that "it had been accelerated by the intention having transpired sooner than was meant, in consequence of which the borough was already in a state of canvass by another candidate." Disappointed in his negotiation with Mr. Pitt, and feeling the necessity of strengthening his government at such a conjuncture, the Minister had now obtained the accession of Mr. Tierney, who had throughout acted in a friendly and approving manner towards his administration, and was both an able financier and an acute and powerful debater.* This influx of strength in the House of Commons enabled Mr. Addington to transfer Lord Hawkesbury to the House of Lords, where additional speakers were greatly required; but this result of the arrangement was unfortunately counterbalanced by the effect which it was supposed to have produced on Mr. Pitt, to whom, it will be remembered, Mr. Tierney had been both politically and personally opposed. Except, however, dropping a few words of approbation on

* "Mr. Tierney had given offence to the Whigs by refusing to join Mr. Fox in his secession from parliament. By means of that secession he became the leader of the Opposition, such as it then was. You may judge of their numbers by the circumstance that they generally went home to dinner with Tyrwhit Jones in his coach. Tierney, however, made some clever speeches, which gave an appearance of debate. Mr. Addington used to say that there was no man whose parliamentary talents he envied more than Tierney's, as he always expressed his meaning in the clearest manner, and said neither more nor less than he intended."—*Letter from Lord Bexley to the Dean of Norwich, Sept. 15th*, 1845.

breaking off the negotiation with France, on the 23d of May, Mr. Pitt took no part in the proceedings of parliament until the debate of the 3d of June, on Colonel Patten's motion of censure on the government. Prior to, but connected with, this event, however, circumstances occurred which require to be noticed with some attention. "Great difficulties," Mr. Abbot observed in his diary of June 2d, "respecting the motion of to-morrow. Mr. Pitt is inclined to move the orders of the day* upon Colonel Patten's motion of censure. The ministers will not agree to this, but insist upon a direct negative on the motion of censure. They desired also a moderate vote of justification of their conduct; but Mr. Pitt would not hear of it, saying, 'It was throwing down

* The obvious reason of Mr. Addington's declining to accept what Mr. Sheridan called the "*shabby shelter* of the previous question," was that, at the least, it would have been an indication of weakness on the part of the government, if not an admission that it owed its continuance to Mr. Pitt's forbearance. Passing to the "orders of the day" is a mode of saving the time of the House by getting rid of any question irregularly introduced, and therefore inexpedient to be discussed at that particular moment, by proceeding to the proper business of the day as previously arranged. But although no objectionable inference would be drawn from this practice on any ordinary occasion, a resort to it under peculiar circumstances — those, for instance, where, as in the present case, the proposition so got rid of refers to individual character or conduct — unavoidably implies censure or contempt.

After Mr. Pitt's insinuation, therefore, that "he could not say the Minister was without blame," his moving the "orders of the day" was indeed a species of "shabby shelter" which no high-minded man could accept. From Mr. Sheridan and others being found to use the term "previous question," instead of "orders of the day," in treating of this debate, it might possibly be inferred that there is no distinction between the two motions. In the "Life of Lord Eldon," however, vol. i. p. 232., there is an elaborate explanation of the former term, from which it appears that this is *not* the case.

the gauntlet.'" Mr. Abbot then added, that Lord Melville had written to Lord Pelham*, stating his readiness to negative any motion of censure; and that Mr. Addington had shown him a letter which he had himself written to his Lordship, refusing to agree to the previous question being moved on the orders of the day. That letter will now be given, from a copy preserved amongst the Sidmouth papers:—

"My dear Lord, Downing Street, May 30th, 1803.

"I have reflected upon what passed between us this morning, and I must say that I feel little or no anxiety for a vote of approbation on Thursday and Friday next, unless the debate in either House should take a different turn from that which there is reason to expect. It appears, however, upon reference to your letter to Lord Pelham, that you propose to negative Lord Fitzwilliam's motions, and this course seems to be the only one that government can adopt, as an acquiescence in any other would indicate an unwillingness on their part to meet the decision of parliament upon their conduct in the late negotiation. In your conversation you intimated to me that there was an intention of moving the orders of the day, and it is in consequence of the objection which I feel to that proceeding that I give you this trouble; though I beg you to understand that I refer only to the line which

* This letter, though preserved, is not of sufficient importance to be introduced into this narrative. Its purport may be gathered from the following memorandum in Lord Sidmouth's handwriting, which appears on the back of it:—"An ineffectual attempt to induce government to support the previous question in the two Houses of Parliament." Lord Melville did *not* oppose Lord Fitzwilliam's motion of censure in the House of Lords, but supported Lord Mulgrave's motion for an adjournment, which was tantamount to an indirect censure on the government. In his speech he expressed strong disapprobation of many parts of the conduct of ministers, but thought it would be a dangerous time to remove them. The amendment, which was met by a direct negative on the part of the government, was thrown out by a majority of 86 to 17.

it seems to me to be proper for government to adopt, without offering any opinion upon that which may be determined upon by you and your friends. Believe me, my dear Lord, to be very sincerely yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON.

"To the Lord Viscount Melville."

The following are the terms in which Lord Sidmouth used to relate this circumstance to his friends:—"Pitt repented of his pledge to support Colonel Patten's motion for a censure on the government; and sent Lord Melville to me four days before the debate to endeavour to compromise matters, and to convey an offer from him to move the orders of the day. On my instantly refusing to accede to this, Lord Melville begged me to reconsider this determination. 'I see nothing to consider,' was my reply. 'Nothing shall induce me to remain in power a single day after an indirect censure has been passed on the government.' I then went to the Cabinet, and told the circumstance to the Duke of Portland and Lord Eldon. The Duke warmly thanked me for my firmness: Lord Eldon asked me, whether I felt secure."*

It may readily be imagined that Mr. Addington did not regard with indifference the arrival of the evening on which the wisdom of his measures, and the stability of his government, were to be so severely tested; nor, probably, did Mr. Pitt approach the debate without some degree of anxiety, since he must now have strongly felt the difficulties of the awkward and contradictory position in which he had placed himself, by listening to those who advised his return to power after his recent voluntary retirement from it. He could not consistently oppose the government

* Mr. Milnes Gaskell's Notes.

after his "solemn pledge, *not redeemable by any lapse of time, nor ever to be cancelled without Mr. Addington's express consent*, to advise and support it." He could not fully carry out this pledge without strengthening his rival, and thus deferring his own return to office. His only option, therefore, was to pursue a middle course, by moving the orders of the day. Mr. Addington's assent, however, to such a motion would have implied an admission of weakness on his part, in which no possible consideration could have disposed him to acquiesce. That Minister's spirited resolution, therefore, to meet Colonel Patten's resolution with a direct negative, and to stand or fall by the decision of the House, frustrated all hopes of extrication from this dilemma, and placed Mr. Pitt and his followers, on the division, in a very unpleasant predicament.

When the important day arrived, Colonel Patten proposed a series of long and laboured resolutions, imputing blame to the government, chiefly for not having resisted the continued aggressions of France with more effect; but as this topic must be noticed in a subsequent chapter, we have now only to deal with the present discussion as far as it affected the relations between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington. It is sufficient, therefore, for this purpose that the debate should be described in the brief but accurate statement of Mr. Abbot, who, as Speaker, presided in the House on the occasion: —

"*June* 3*d*, 1803. House of Commons. — Colonel Patten moved the resolution of censure upon ministers for their conduct in the negotiation with France. Several members spoke shortly till about half-past nine, when Mr. Grenville rose, and spoke for two hours. Mr. Addington, in his reply, after fully explaining and justifying the proceedings of government on every point which had been made the subject

of censure, concluded with conjuring the House to proceed at once to a final vote of condemnation or acquittal, that ministers might know whether they were to stand or fall, and the country have their full exertions in conducting the war, or else that it would set them aside by an explicit declaration of censure if they deserved it. Mr. Pitt rose immediately after Mr. Addington, and stated that if he agreed with Mr. Grenville, that the papers on the table afforded evidence of incapacity and misconduct on the part of the ministers, then, however painful it might be to his private feelings thus to censure individuals whom he respected, he should feel himself bound to do so. If, on the other hand, he considered the explanation offered by the government so clear as to justify a decided negative of the propositions which had been moved, a negative which would imply approbation; for in such a matter to avoid censure was the same as to have deserved applause; he should feel happy in opposing the motion: but to such extent either of approbation or of censure he could not go. He could not concur in all charges implied in the propositions, nor would he say that the Minister was without blame. He would not discuss the question itself, but should move the orders of the day, and advise the House to devote its whole exertions to the military and financial preparations of the country. As the Crown still honoured the present ministers with its confidence, to drive them out of office by a vote would, he argued, only throw the country into confusion, by creating a necessity for new arrangements for new ministers—a protracted and hazardous experiment with such an enemy at the gate. He was aware that his friends on the treasury bench must feel their situation irksome, as long as a question in which they were personally involved should remain undecided. Nevertheless, when other sacrifices were demanded for the public interests, personal feelings must be overlooked."

From such protection as the foregoing vibratory speech indicated, the Minister could not possibly have derived either honour or advantage.* No wonder, then,

* "Mr. Pitt's amendment on Colonel Patten's motion was an act of direct hostility: it was universally so considered, and from that time his opposition never relaxed whenever it could be shown."—*MS. Notes by Lord Sidmouth.*

that "Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and the Master of the Rolls, should have declined, on the part of the cabinet, the offered compromise between a direct censure and a total acquittal, and should have demanded a final decision of the question by means of an immediate division. Mr. Fox would not vote either way: he thought the ministers blamable in their conduct, but would not give a vote that should tend to remove them, because he considered them more pacific than any other ministers likely to succeed them.

On Mr. Pitt's proposition for reading the orders of the day, the numbers were, tellers included: —

For the motion - - -	58
Against it - - - -	335
Majority - - -	277

So that the whole number which voted was 393.

In the above division the Minister, Mr. Fox, and the Grenville party, with their respective friends, voted against Mr. Pitt's motion.

Previous to the second division, which was on the main question, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and several of their respective friends, left the House. The numbers were, including tellers: —

For Colonel Patten's resolutions -	36
Against them - - -	277
Majority - - -	241

So that, on the second division, there were in the House 313 members, from which it appears that the strength of the respective parties was as follows: —

The Ministers on the last division - -	275
Mr. Pitt and his friends who left the House previous to that division - - -	56
The Grenville party who divided for Mr. Patten's resolutions - - - -	34
Mr. Fox and his friends, to make up the number in the first division - -	24
	389

Had Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox joined the Grenvilles in the second division, there would have been —

For the resolutions - - -	114
Against them - - -	275
Majority - - -	161

But it is more reasonable to suppose that had Mr. Pitt joined the Grenvilles, Mr. Fox would have voted with the Minister; and in that case the numbers would have been —

For the resolutions - - -	90
Against them - - -	299
Majority - - -	209 *

This signal discomfiture of Mr. Pitt's first overt act of opposition must have been very mortifying to his feelings, and tended probably to widen the interval which was already separating him from the friend of his youth.

* This analysis of the divisions is copied from a printed "Sketch of the State of Parties, by an M.P.," which was supposed to have been prepared by Sir Hugh Inglis, Bart., M.P., an East India director, and father of the present truly respected member for the University of Oxford.

The day following the debate was the King's birthday; and Mr. Abbot has recorded in his diary, that, on attending the court, he found "the King in high spirits, and his household taking pains to say that his Majesty was much pleased with the event of the preceding night." On the same day the patriotic monarch placed his sentiments on record, by addressing the following letter to the Minister, whose firmness on this occasion had foiled the efforts of three parties, feeble indeed in number, but singularly powerful from the character and talents of their leaders.

King George III. to the Right Honourable Henry Addington.

"Queen's Palace, June 4th, 1803.

"The King feels much pleasure on receiving Mr. Addington's account, that, on Mr. Pitt's motion for the order of the day, the ayes were but 58 to 335; and on Mr. Patten's motion for a censure, the ayes were 36, noes 277: as these events prove the real sense of the House of Commons, and that parliament truly means support to the executive power, not to faction. GEORGE R."

The Minister also received on the same occasion the following letter of approbation from the Duke of Queensberry, whose esteem was founded solely on his opinion of Mr. Addington's public services, and who subsequently testified that opinion, by bequeathing to him a considerable legacy.

"My dear Sir, Piccadilly, Sunday, June 5th.

"Your old friends have done as I expected; but I never thought they could have done you so much service, which I really believe was not their intention. I am glad it has so happened, for no one can be better pleased than I am with your triumphant situation; so much to your honour and credit, so advantageous to the public, and which you so well deserve.

I hope you will accept my congratulations on this occasion. I shall be happy when I have an opportunity in person of assuring you how very sincere they are, how much you have my good wishes, and how truly I am

"Your faithful servant,

"QUEENSBERRY."

From this time to the close of the session Mr. Pitt, who had determined to be silent as to all that was past, and to give his attention only to the prospective measures of the government, took but a limited part in the proceedings of Parliament. On the 10th of June Mr. Abbot states, "Mr. Pitt saw the outline of the proposed budget, which Steele communicated to him. He said the magnitude of the supplies to be raised within the year exceeded his expectations, and fully met his wishes, and to the details he saw no material objection." Mr. Pitt made no observations in the House on Mr. Addington's budget; but when Mr. Yorke brought forward the Additional Force Bill on the 20th of June, Mr. Pitt, rising after Mr. Addington, expressed his satisfaction in the principle of the measure which his right honourable friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had supported. He spoke also in approval of the Military Service Bill; but on the 13th of July, when the report of the committee on the Property Duty Bill was discussed, he made some objections to several of the details, and moved an instruction to the committee, that "provision should be made in the bill for certain abatements in respect of income derived from land and funds," which was opposed by Mr. Addington, and was negatived, on a division, by 150 to 50.* On this occasion, as Mr. Abbot has ob-

* It is stated in a pamphlet, which will shortly be mentioned ("A plain Answer to a few cursory Remarks," p. 62.), and which

served, in his diary, "words of considerable asperity, or rather language in a tone of asperity, passed from Mr. Pitt to Mr. Addington."

Mr. Pitt now retired to Walmer, from whence he watched the progress of events. No doubt he deeply felt this estrangement from his friend; the more so, since up to this period the false position in which they stood towards each other was chiefly attributable to the course he himself had pursued. But now a new element of discord must be alluded to. A war of pamphlets arose; for resorting to which fruitful source of irritation, the author feels bound to consider Mr. Addington's party chiefly responsible, since from that side the weapon which first provoked hostilities unquestionably proceeded. It was a paper of considerable ability, bearing the date of September 5th, 1803, and was understood to have been written by a Mr. Bentley.* Amongst other irritating matters, it presented a very unfavourable view of the state of affairs when Mr. Addington assumed the government, and commented with some severity on Mr. Pitt's

is believed to have been revised by Mr. Pitt himself, that Mr. Pitt did not object to the incomes of stockholders being made liable to the just exigency of the state in the same degree as all other incomes; but only claimed, in cases of incomes of small amount derived from the funds, the same exemptions which were granted to small incomes derived from trade, agriculture, or any other source. This would have occasioned a serious deficiency in the returns of the tax; Mr. Addington, therefore, looking to the paramount necessity of raising the largest possible amount by annual taxation, very properly demurred. He thought it prudent afterwards, however, to concede the point.

* The title is, "A few cursory Remarks upon the State of Parties during the Administration of the Right Hon. Henry Addington. By a near Observer."

conduct in withdrawing his assistance from the administration, after having engaged to yield it his "constant, active, and zealous support," which, it declared, "was the precise form of words used." It therefore naturally produced the effect of considerably exasperating Mr. Pitt himself, and of giving much umbrage to his friends, who published an answer, entitled "A plain Answer to the Misrepresentations and Calumnies contained in the cursory Remarks of a near Observer," which was supposed, as the author has been informed by an eminent existing authority on political matters, to have been written by Mr. T. P. Courtenay. This publication necessarily tended to widen the breach; it contained, in truth, some warm retorts, which, as an almost inevitable result, were speedily responded to in a similar strain by a second missile from another of Mr. Addington's admirers, Dr. Bissitt, under the title of "A plain Reply to a plain Answer; being a more fair State of the Question between the late and the present Ministers." This was followed by two further publications on the same side, one entitled "Reply to a plain Answer," the other "The Reply of a near Observer;" both of which, as appears from answers to inquiries made of the respected publisher, Mr. Hatchard, were written by Mr. Bentley himself. Other combatants now took part in the fray. A "member of parliament," generally believed to have been Mr. Robert Ward, published his "View of the relative Situations of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington on the Night of Mr. Patten's Motion," which was much in favour of Mr. Pitt; and this was answered by the

other side in "A Letter to Robert Ward, Esq., M.P., occasioned by his Pamphlet."

All these productions partook so largely of the exaggerations usually perceptible in party conflicts of this nature, that they proved scarcely less injurious to friends than to opponents. It is considered sufficient therefore for the purposes of this biography simply to enumerate their titles. The exchange of these unfriendly documents occupied the whole intervening period between the autumn of 1803 and the final step taken by Mr. Pitt in the spring of 1804, when he contended side by side with Mr. Fox against the same government which he had previously bound himself to support. Having thus traced the decline of this long and intimate friendship through all its stages, from the first abatement of eager co-operation between the principals, to the prosecution of active hostilities amongst the partisans, the author's remaining duty will be to record at the proper period its termination as to political subjects. Meanwhile it may be observed, that, with a single exception, the circumstances which led to this lamented rupture were entirely beyond Mr. Addington's personal management or control. With regard to that one exception, the commencement of the war of pamphlets, he subsequently was heard repeatedly to declare his entire ignorance of it; and such being the case, it would appear to be a harsh judgment to make him responsible, at least to any large extent, for the mistaken zeal of his friends. But however this may be, Mr. Pitt is doubtless entitled to the full benefit of the admission, that this objectionable mode of warfare was resorted to in the first instance by his opponents.

CHAPTER XIX.

1803.

Pacific Character of Mr. Addington's Administration. France the real Aggressor in the War of 1803. *Art of the First Consul in casting the Blame of the Rupture upon England. Causes of the Rupture. Complaints of Bonaparte against the Freedom of the Press in England. Efforts of Mr. Addington to check the Publication of Libels on the French. Letters from Sir Richard Hill. Mr. Addington's Conference with M. Otto. Bonaparte's Violation of the Neutrality of the Swiss — His continued Occupation of Holland. Intercepted Letter from M. Talleyrand to French Agent at Dublin. General Andreossi arrives as Ambassador. Claim of England to retain Malta in Compensation for French Encroachments. Colonel Sebastiani's Letter from Egypt. Bonaparte's Treatment of British Vessels in French Ports. Interview between Bonaparte and Lord Whitworth. King's Message of* 8th *March to Parliament. Letters from George III. — Lord Nelson — Duke of Queensberry. Bonaparte's Violence towards Lord Whitworth. Offensive Article in the "Hamburgh Gazette." War declared. Reflections on Mr. Addington's Conduct in the Negotiation. Extracts from Mr. Abbot's Diary. Correspondence. Debate on the King's Message respecting the War. Large Majority in favour of Government. Letter from George III. Mr. Addington's Sentiments, written four Years afterwards.*

FROM recording the circumstances of a difference between individuals, it is now necessary to direct our attention to a rupture of a far more serious character—one which, to a greater or less extent, involved in its consequences every nation of the earth—a rup-

ture between the two leading powers in Europe. Mr. Addington always considered the pacification of Amiens the great act of his ministerial life; and experience has proved the truth of his opinion, since it resulted chiefly, if not entirely, from the relief to the finances, and the subsequent unanimity, occasioned by that event, that England was enabled at length to bring the struggle to a successful issue. Such being the Minister's deep conviction of the advantages of the peace, the omission of any means essential to its maintenance would have argued on his part a strange degree of inconsistency and weakness. Accordingly, the chief complaints which his contemporaries alleged against him were—that he was too slow to take offence—over-anxious to maintain peace; insomuch that we find even his royal master questioning whether he had not "perhaps carried his forbearing policy to excess." In short, our predecessors have transmitted to us no historical truth apparently better founded than this — that the character of Mr. Addington's administration was altogether pacific; and that he at length engaged in hostilities because, as he distinctly stated in the House of Commons, "it was no longer possible for him to remain at peace."*

* His, in this instance, was the wisdom which has been so beautifully described as "peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." That of his antagonist, on the contrary, the Apostle has well characterised as productive only "of confusion and every evil work. — From whence," he asks, "come wars and fightings among you?" From your own evil passions is the answer implied. And, as regarded the ruler of France, how truly also were the succeeding words verified in the final result of the struggle — "Ye desire to have, and have not: ye kill, and cannot obtain: ye

In the view of the political economist, the philanthropist, and the Christian, no defence of Mr. Addingtons's love of peace is now, happily, required; since few greater compliments can be paid to a prime minister than to call him pacific: but, to the surprise of all English readers, an historical work relating to this subject, recently published in another kingdom, charges Mr. Addington with having been the aggressor, and author of the war in 1803; and this is an imputation which, though utterly groundless, does not readily admit of direct refutation. For the aggressions of the French government, which Mr. Addington was at length compelled to resent, though constantly increasing in number and importance, scarcely amounted, when taken separately, to adequate grounds of war. Neither did the First Consul resort to any *literal* infraction of the treaty of Amiens, for which, indeed, he had no occasion; since, in consequence of the success of Great Britain in the preceding war, all the restitutions stipulated for by that treaty were in favour of France. This enabled him, though himself, in reality, the aggressor, adroitly to cast the blame of the quarrel upon the British government, by prosecuting his encroachments on the Continent to such an intolerable extent as at length compelled resort to the only means of reprisal within Mr. Addington's power—namely, the retention of the conquests not yet restored, until France should have re-established that continental balance which was *virtually* defined at Amiens; and which she had already, in repeated in-

fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not."—*James*, chaps. iii. and iv.

stances, overthrown. By this petty act of chicanery the real defendant in this great international cause became the plaintiff; and actually availed himself of such position to demand "the fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, and nothing but the treaty*," when he knew that his own conduct had made it impossible for the British Minister to comply with this requisition without surrendering, together with her best interests, the honour and independence of his country. There was, however, nothing unusual in this line of conduct: on the contrary, it was one which ambition too frequently pursues; and it is not uncommon, even in private life, to see peaceable and inoffensive parties treated in precisely the same manner by unprincipled or encroaching neighbours. In such cases aggressions, too trivial perhaps to form separately a sufficient ground of complaint, are added one to another until, of necessity, the cup of forbearance overflows; and the aggrieved party, finding the aggregate of provocation intolerable, is compelled at length to resent it, without, perhaps, being able to adduce such a specific catalogue of injuries as will instantly obtain for him the sympathy to which he is, in reality, entitled.

This was precisely the position of the British ministers during the autumn of 1802 and the spring of 1803. The cup was gradually filling. Notwithstanding their remonstrances, they saw the process

* M. Otto was instructed to insist on "tout le traité d'Amiens, rien que le traité d'Amiens;" to which Lord Hawkesbury replied, "L'état du Continent à l'époque du traité d'Amiens, rien que cet état." — *Histoire du Consulat, par M. A. Thiers*, vol. iv. liv. xvi. p. 262.

daily advancing, yet could not take any immediate step to prevent it; and they foresaw that whenever it should be necessary to act in a decided manner, they must inevitably be attacked by one party for having interfered too soon, and by another for having waited so long.

As the best means of refuting the charge that Mr. Addington provoked the war, the author here purposes to compile from public documents a brief statement of the circumstances which led to that event; adding such explanations as the private papers in his possession may afford. Of these latter, however, there is an unusual paucity; resulting, probably, from the ministers' literal fulfilment of their promise, that they would present to parliament every communication from each government interchanged on the occasion.

From the commencement of the peace between France and England Bonaparte appears to have adopted and acted upon the crude notion, that by the treaty of Amiens the two countries had divided land and sea between them; and, consequently, that as long as our naval superiority remained undisturbed, Great Britain had no pretext for interference or remonstrance regarding his proceedings on the Continent. On the other hand, the British Minister reasonably expected that England, by her numerous restitutions of conquests, had fully purchased the right of requiring that the affairs of the Continent, as regarded the balance of power, should remain in the exact position which they occupied at the period of the peace. The necessary result of these conflicting views was, that England remonstrated whenever France indulged

in her favourite propensity of encroaching on her neighbour's territory; and when, at length, she found words unavailing, she suspended the course of restitution, and declined any longer to fulfil conditions for which she did not receive the expected and proper return.

It was impossible that the relations between two neighbouring governments, entertaining such conflicting views of their rights and position, should long remain in an amicable state. Almost, indeed, before the ink was dry with which the treaty was written, causes of dissatisfaction had arisen. One of the earliest complaints proceeded from the French consul; and the circumstances are deserving of attention, as indicative of his ambition and overbearing character, and of Mr. Addington's sincere disposition to maintain the peace. Bonaparte's remonstrance upon this occasion was grounded on animadversions made upon his government by the press in England, especially by a French refugee named Peltier, a species of annoyance to which he happened to be peculiarly sensitive. The first notice of this subject in the correspondence is contained in the following extract from a letter which Lord Glenbervie addressed to Mr. Addington as early as the 24th of May, 1802:—

"On Thursday evening I had the following conversation with M. Otto, whom I met accidentally at a concert. He began by talking of the abuse contained in many of our journals against the present measures of Bonaparte; and observed, that the animosities in France, which the war had excited against this country, are yet far from being at an end; that the First Consul is extremely popular; and that if the paragraphs against him continue in our papers, and are not properly counteracted, we shall run the risk of a renewal

of the war—'qui deviendroit alors un combat à mort.' I thought it right to remark, that he knew the nature of this country and constitution well enough to be aware that government could not prevent publications of the sort he alluded to. He answered, that parliament is all-powerful; that we had prosecuted a person who had called the Emperor Paul a madman*," &c. &c.

* M. Otto followed this up on the 25th of July, by transmitting to Lord Hawkesbury an order he had received to demand the punishment of the abuses of the press committed by Peltier, Cobbett, the editor of the "Courier François de Londres," and other writers. "The want of positive laws," he observed, "against these sorts of offences cannot palliate the violation of the law of nations, according to which peace should put a stop to all hostilities.—The particular constitution of England is subordinate to the general principles of the law of nations, which supersede the laws of each individual state." To this remonstrance Lord Hawkesbury replied by expressing the great displeasure felt by the King's government at Peltier's last number, and its anxious desire that he should be punished, for which purpose it had submitted the case for the consideration of the law officers of the Crown. This explanation, however, did not satisfy the Chief Consul, who directed M. Otto, on the 17th of August, to demand from his Majesty's government the fulfilment of the six following requisitions:—

1. To put a stop to the offensive publications.
2. To send out of the Isle of Jersey certain seditious French subjects resident therein.
3. To send away also the former Bishops of Arras and St. Pol de Leon, and other disaffected persons.
4. To transport Georges and his adherents to Canada.
5. To require the princes of the house of Bourbon, resident in England, to repair to Warsaw.
6. To expel from the British territory all French emigrants who may wear decorations belonging to the ancient government of France.

To that part of these requisitions which related to the libellous publications, Lord Hawkesbury, in his reply, referred M. Otto to the law, which was the only protection which the government itself possessed or required—"the British constitution admitting of no previous restraints upon publications of any description."

The ignorance here manifested of the almost unlimited freedom of the British press constituted the chief burden of all the First Consul's complaints against this country. He could not, or would not, understand that our laws secure to every individual an uncontrolled power of acting; and that evil doers are kept in order amongst us, not by previous restraint, but by holding them strictly responsible for their conduct. Considering the enormous evils of war, and the great tendency of exasperating and abusive language applied to a rival nation to produce that calamity, it was perhaps to be lamented that our constitution could not control, in this respect, the licentiousness of the press, and that government had not the power to comply with M. Otto's suggestions. Such, however, was Mr. Addington's anxiety to put an end to this system of provocation, that he caused the influence of government to be privately exercised, as far as propriety admitted, in preventing the editors of newspapers from introducing such offensive articles into their columns. An instance of this occurs in the correspondence for August, 1802; on the 10th of which month Mr. John Heriot, editor of a government journal called "The True Briton," complained to Lord Sidmouth of having "received a message from

To the other demand, the expulsion of emigrants, the reply was, that in every case in which M. Otto could prove a breach of the laws on the part of any French emigrants whatever, his Majesty would take all the measures in his power to oblige them to quit the country, but that as long as they conducted themselves well, they could not be molested; that, in fine, "no representation of any foreign power would ever induce government to violate those rights on which the liberties of the people of this country are founded."

the Treasury, informing him that if such paragraphs as that in 'The True Briton' of that day continued to appear in it, he could no longer receive the protection of government." Mr. Heriot then admits the gross impropriety of the paragraph in question, which had been inserted in his absence; but complains that the government should have expressed its displeasure on the occasion; to all which Mr. Addington returned the following answer: —

"Sir, Eastbourne, Aug. 12th, 1802.

"I have received your letter, and am sincerely concerned that any thing should have happened to wound your feelings, as I respect your principles and character.

"The conduct of a public paper can hardly admit of that minute attention and vigilance on the part of the editor, which would exclude from it all paragraphs but such as had been actually approved of by him; but I doubt whether it be possible even for you to be aware of the consequences produced by opprobrious observations, in papers of such established reputation as yours, on the proceedings of foreign governments, and of those who are at their head. I have not scrupled to say thus much, being convinced that the welfare of the public is invariably your object; and that a temperate intimation, directed to that object, would be received by you with feelings very different from those of dissatisfaction. I am, &c. &c.

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

Mr. Addington, writing afterwards to his brother, observed that "the paragraph complained of was abominable;" and the same opinion was formed of this, or of some other article to a similar purport, by that excellent patriot and philanthropist, Sir Richard Hill, who, about this time, addressed the following observations to Mr. Addington on the subject: —

"For the reason stated by yourself, when you said, 'God forbid I should lay a finger on the liberty of the press*,' I have not before adverted to the inconceivable mischief done, through the channel of inflammatory newspapers poisoning the public mind; but, as a private individual, I took the liberty of remonstrating with the conductor of a loyal paper in high repute on the pernicious tendency of what had appeared in his columns; and I had the pleasure of seeing something like an apology in the same paper a few days afterwards. But this strain was soon over: all I could then do, therefore, was to forbid that paper; and I shall take care that nothing from it or any other, of injurious tendency, appears in the chronicle of our county, throughout which, I feel the sincerest pleasure in assuring you, that, during the many years I have represented it, no minister ever stood so unanimously high and respected, as the present Chancellor of the Exchequer."

Other proofs may be adduced from the correspondence, of Mr. Addington's anxiety to prevent this abuse of the freedom of the press, which necessarily provoked reprisals on the part of the French government. Thus, writing to his brother on the 18th of August, 1802, respecting a retort of this nature in their official paper, which had given great offence in England, he observed that "the article in the 'Moniteur' was the sudden effusion of feelings which had been unwarrantably irritated: nothing is to be apprehended at present; but I plainly perceive that repeated provocations will produce the worst effects." At this period also, as Mr. Addington informed his brother,

* These words of Mr. Addington constitute a sufficient refutation of the following erroneous statement, which Mr. Gifford has admitted into his "Life of Pitt," vol. vi. p. 662.:—"Attempts were made in vain to procure new laws to restrain the press."

he had a conference with M. Otto, which probably related to the same subject: —

"Downing Street, Aug. 21st.

"Otto has just left me, after a very satisfactory conversation of more than an hour."*

It is evident, therefore, that the British Minister spared no efforts to remove all reasonable grounds of difference between the two countries, it being the principle of his government to establish the prosperity of the British empire upon the broad basis of its own resources; and this, he well knew, could only be effected through the continuance of peace.

The author has dwelt longer on this ground of complaint, because it is the only one on the part of France which is supported by even the shadow of a reason; whilst, unfortunately, the grievances of the British government will be found, from the subjoined abstract of the seventy-two papers presented to parliament, to have constituted, both in number and importance, just occasion for remonstrance and reprisals.†

* This was probably the occasion on which M. Otto so entirely misunderstood Mr. Addington's meaning, as, according to M. Thiers, tome iv. livre xv. p. 14., of his "Histoire," to have supposed him to say, "Nous vous abandonnons le Continent." The idea of abandoning the Continent to Bonaparte in the sense in which M. Thiers views it not only never passed Mr. Addington's lips, but could not have entered his mind. There is absolutely nothing, either in his acts, his language, or his correspondence, to justify such an impression. As Mr. Addington and M. Otto must have conversed in a language foreign to one of them, nothing could be more probable than that they should mistake each other's meaning, especially as Mr. Addington, though he understood the French language, did not speak it with much facility.

† As all the documents relating to these events are already before the public, the shortest possible account will here be given,

With the exception respecting the press already alluded to, no jarring string was struck by either nation until the 21st of August, 1802, when M. Talleyrand, on announcing the departure of General Vial, the French minister plenipotentiary, on his way to Malta, reminded Lord Hawkesbury that the three months fixed by the tenth article of the treaty for the evacuation of that island had expired. His Lordship's answer, however, was satisfactory; and nothing further passed between the two countries of an inharmonious character until the 3d of October, on which day Mr. Merry announced to Lord Hawkesbury Bonaparte's interference in the affairs of Switzerland; a proceeding which brought at once into discussion the point at issue between the two governments — whether Great Britain was entitled to interfere in continental affairs so far as to oppose the encroachments of France upon her neighbours, and to insist upon the "status apud pacem;" or whether, as Bonaparte imagined, her insular position "excluded her from the European world, and allowed her no vote in its most important concerns." The particulars of the First Consul's treatment of Switzerland need not be minutely detailed. It will be sufficient to observe here, that it was an unwarrantable interference in the affairs of an

except in the few instances in which the author is enabled to produce any original matter. It should be recollected, however, that the papers presented to parliament contain no reference to Bonaparte's encroachments in Italy, and his placing himself at the head of the Cisalpine, afterwards called the Italian republic, and his obtaining from Spain the reversion of the duchy of Parma and of the island of Elba, because those events occurred before the treaty was signed; but they contributed considerably to the state of feeling in this country which attended the renewal of the war.

independent nation, and amounted to an infraction of the 11th article of the treaty of Luneville. The offence consisted in his addressing a manifesto to the eighteen Swiss cantons, in which, after upbraiding them for their civil dissentions, he recalled his resolution of neutrality, and *consented*, though uninvited, to be the mediator of their differences; and this he followed up by sending an army of 40,000 men, under General Ney, to take military possession of the country. Whilst these events were in progress, the unfortunate Swiss sent an agent to Paris, in the vain hope of averting the blow; and this person having, through their representatives, requested the interference of the leading powers of Europe, including England, the object of Mr. Merry's despatch was to transmit the application to his Majesty's government. The arrival of this intelligence occasioned great dissatisfaction in Downing Street, as is evident from the following postscript to a letter which Mr. Addington addressed to his brother on the 7th of October:—"The accounts from Switzerland are most interesting, and those from Paris, in consequence of the transactions in that country, intolerable." These feelings were expressed three days afterwards, in a very manly and dignified note of remonstrance, by Lord Hawkesbury to M. Otto. This was followed up by the appointment on the same day of Mr. Moore, as the King's confidential agent to the Swiss confederacy, to whom instructions were given to proceed immediately to the frontiers of that country. On Mr. Moore's arrival, however, at Constance, the diet had already submitted to France; and as the continental powers, without whose co-operation it was impossible for England even to

approach Switzerland, declined to interfere, the British Minister could only add this to the long catalogue of aggressions by which the French ruler was gradually provoking the war destined to terminate in his own destruction. On this subject Mr. Addington expressed his sentiments to his brother in the following terms:—

"Oct. 21st.

"The intelligence of yesterday was not satisfactory: it appears that the Swiss had given way; but we have good reason to believe that their submission was not unconditional. For some days preceding the arrival of this account, there had been more prudence and moderation in the language, and, I incline to think, in the councils of the French government. They certainly felt that they had gone much too far."

At this point the author digresses from the official documents to introduce a letter addressed to the Minister by one who, like himself, though personally fearless of war, was not ashamed to stand forward on Christian principles as an advocate for that greatest of all earthly blessings — peace.

"Hawkstone, Oct. 26th, 1802.

"Dear and much honoured Sir,

"I am persuaded you are of opinion that we have had enough of war and its direful calamities. Ought we not, therefore, if possible, to keep the sword in the scabbard, unless there were an absolute necessity of drawing it out? The short question is, whether there be now any such necessity. Are there not continental powers enough to maintain their own rights, and to take part in each other's quarrels, without our interference? What have we got by all our continental alliances? Nothing but an enormous increase of debts and taxes, of national clamour and distress, among all ranks of people. To send men to Switzerland, through the heart of the Continent, cannot seriously be thought of: to

send money, can serve no purpose but that of impoverishing ourselves. If Bonaparte chooses to interfere in the internal government of Switzerland, is it our province, duty, or interest, to try to prevent it? His pretences to put an end to civil war may probably have no other motive for their basis than that of ambition; still, what cause is this for our meddling? Were we not silent and neutral spectators at the partition of Poland? Why, then, should we break a peace which every friend to the country rejoices in; which has endeared his Majesty's present ministers to the nation at large, and raised them to the highest degree of popularity; from which, however, they must fall, if now they make war the order of the day? and oh! what joy and triumph will this afford to the Temples and Windhamites! * * * There are, in the Protestant canton of Berne alone, not less than 100,000 men trained to arms. But did Berne, or any of the cantons, ever assist England? or did England ever expect their aid? Let them, however, call in the aid of Austria, Russia, and others of their powerful neighbours, and not embroil our happy isle, by nature secluded as she is (penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos) from all continental connexions, except what are necessary for her trade and commerce. If war be once recommenced, where will it end? 'The beginning of strife,' saith Wisdom itself, 'is like the letting out of water.' Our two last wars—the French and the American war—each endured as long as the Trojan war.

"I can truly say that you are often in my prayers; that as, under the Divine Providence, you have been the instrument of giving us peace, so you may be the means of continuing it. May 'pax potior bello' be ever your motto! I am, &c. &c.

"RICH^{D}. HILL."

At this period also the First Consul added another item to the list of his encroachments, by not complying with the stipulation into which he had entered with the Batavian republic, to withdraw the French auxiliary troops amounting to nearly 11,000, on the pretext that there were many disaffected persons in-

triguing against the constitution in that country. Mr. Liston, the British minister at the Hague, reported on the 29th of October, that these troops, whose departure, originally fixed to take place on the conclusion of the definitive treaty, had been postponed until the 23d of September, had, after marching for a few days towards France, again been halted on the frontiers, where they continued to demand their pay and maintenance from the Batavian government. This also was a case respecting which no specific step could be taken; but it tended to show how little the French government could be depended on for fulfilling the spirit of any treaty whatever.

Such indeed was the unsatisfactory state of our relations with France at this period, that even the sanguine mind of Mr. Addington was not wholly divested of anxiety. This he betrayed in a letter to Mr. Abbot, dated October 30th; in which he remarked how "painful it was to think how soon the enjoyments arising from a state of peace and prosperity might be interrupted;" and again, a few days after, in the following words, addressed to his brother:—"The tone on the other side of the water is at present moderate; but the state of things is critical; and even in conversation, I should be unwilling to hazard a conjecture as to the result. We must, however, take care not only to be right but very right." At this period, November 6th, General Andreossi arrived in London as ambassador from the French government, and Lord Whitworth was despatched to Paris, to represent his Britannic Majesty in that capital. Shortly after this a discovery was made which excited great indignation throughout England, as tending to show

that the French did not scruple, under the name of commercial agents, to employ spies in the British dominions. A letter was intercepted which M. Talleyrand had addressed on the 17th of November, 1802, to a French agent at Dublin by name Fauvelet, which directed him to obtain, through merchants and clerks of the Customs, and to transmit to him, answers to a series of questions enclosed, relating to the military and naval circumstances of the district he was in, and "to procure a plan of the ports, with the soundings and moorings, and to state the draught of water, and the wind best suited for ingress and egress." There was no material change in the diplomatic relations between the two nations during the remainder of the year; Mr. Addington maintaining the same prepared, but pacific attitude, which he had preserved throughout the negotiations. The parliament, which had assembled on the 16th of November, was opened by his Majesty in person on the 23d of that month. The speech contained some ominous expressions, indicating the precarious state of the negotiations; one of which, in particular, invited the two branches of the legislature to agree with his Majesty in thinking, that "it was incumbent on them to adopt those means of security which were best calculated to afford the prospect of preserving to his subjects the blessings of peace." Nothing further occurred to intimate the critical state of foreign affairs, except the unusual magnitude of the peace establishment, amounting to 129,000 land forces and 50,000 seamen and marines, which was unanimously voted. Both Houses adjourned for the Christmas recess; and it was not until the end of January that the unpleasant altercations with France

were resumed in a conversation between Lord Whitworth and M. Talleyrand, in which the latter required to know "what were his Majesty's intentions with regard to the evacuation of Malta." In his reply to this inquiry, dated February 9th, 1803, Lord Hawkesbury intimated, *for the first time*, that, "as the treaty of Amiens had been negotiated with reference to the actual state of possession" of the two nations at that period, *i. e.* according to the balance of power then subsisting between them, his Majesty had a right by the law of nations, in consequence of the additions to her territories since obtained by France, to interfere for the purpose of obtaining compensation for the difference thus effected. This allusion particularly related to the annexations made by France in Switzerland, Holland, and Italy, for which increase of power, his Majesty was entitled to claim an equivalent. His Majesty, however, would have waved this claim, and have taken measures to carry into effect the true intent and spirit of the 10th article of the treaty, but for the extraordinary publication of the report of Colonel Sebastiani to the First Consul respecting Egypt, which obliged his Majesty distinctly to declare that he could not enter into any further discussion concerning Malta, until he should have received a satisfactory explanation on that subject.

This report of Colonel Sebastiani, which was published in the "Moniteur" of the 30th of January, appeared most critically to prevent the restoration of Malta. He had been despatched on a mission to Egypt; and the authority which he assumed, the language which he held, and, above all, the gross misrepresentations which he published respecting the

British General and troops in Egypt, and the conduct of the English government, were calculated to convince even the least suspicious of the contemplated resumption of Egypt by France. The publication, therefore, of this offensive document by authority was calculated especially to excite the jealousy of this country, and to make the surrender of Malta, the stepping-stone to India, more unpalatable than ever.

To all these just grounds of complaint must be added another, which was severely felt by the commercial public, namely, the First Consul's obstinate refusal of all international communication; so that not only did no reciprocity of trade result from the peace, but even British vessels which were driven into French ports by stress of weather, or resorted thither for purposes of commerce, were, under a barbarous edict of the fiend Robespierre still enforced, seized and confiscated. This naturally rendered that influential interest, the mercantile community, disgusted with a peace from which no real advantages resulted, and prepared the way for that almost unanimous approbation with which the declaration of war was received in this country.

The determination of his Majesty not to surrender Malta until he should have received a satisfactory explanation from the French government was communicated by Lord Whitworth on the 15th of February to M. Talleyrand, who admitted that the jealousy we felt respecting Egypt, with a view to India, was natural; but declared that Sebastiani's mission was strictly commercial. Three days afterwards, Lord Whitworth, by desire of the First Consul, had an interview, at the Tuilleries, with that personage,

who, in an animated speech of two hours, recapitulated all his pretended subjects of complaint against England, placing in the front rank the retention of Malta and Alexandria, although it had already been explained to him that the latter was now evacuated, and that the delay had solely arisen from accidental circumstances. No beneficial effect resulted from this interview, in seeking which the First Consul deviated unnecessarily from the beaten track of diplomacy. There was now a substantive question for discussion, which could not fail to bring matters to a crisis. The French government required the evacuation of Malta by the British troops; his Majesty would not consent to do this, "until some security should have been given that by so doing he should not expose the safety of his own possessions in India." In notifying this determination, on the 18th of February, Lord Hawkesbury described the then existing state of the question respecting Malta in the following terms: — "With regard to the 10th article of the treaty, the stipulations contained in it, owing to circumstances which could not be controlled, have not been found capable of execution. The refusal of Russia to accede to the arrangement, except on condition that the Maltese *langue* should be abolished; the silence of the court of Berlin to the request that it should become a guaranteeing power; the abolition of the Spanish priories in defiance of the treaty; the declaration of Portugal that she should sequestrate the property of the Portuguese priories, and the non-election of a grand master — these circumstances were sufficient to warrant his Majesty in suspending the evacuation of the island."

On the 4th of March M. Talleyrand informed Lord Whitworth that General Andreossi had been instructed to present a specific requisition, and demand a categorical answer, respecting the point in dispute. Before, however, these instructions had reached their destination, the British ministry had already taken a step which plainly marked their resolution to maintain the position which they had assumed. The time had arrived when they considered it their duty to show that the efforts they had hitherto made for the maintenance of peace did not result from the absence of preparation for war, or any apprehension of its consequences; and they were confirmed in this decision by an *exposé* addressed by the French government to the legislature on the 22d of February; in which, after mentioning the retention of Alexandria and Malta, and stating that "there were in England two parties struggling for power, one of which appeared desirous to maintain the peace which they had concluded, but the other had sworn eternal hatred to France," it observed that "as long as this contest should last, the republic must keep on foot 500,000 men, to undertake its defence and avenge its injuries."

Under all these circumstances, the King's cabinet determined to advise his Majesty to inform his parliament by a message that he had judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions, and that he confidently relied on their public spirit and liberality to support him in this conjuncture. It appears from the subjoined note, which is given to show the readiness with which that upright monarch devoted himself to his public duties, that he repaired to town expressly to attend the council held on this important occasion:—

"Windsor, March 6th, 1803, $\frac{M}{25}$ past 9, P. M.

"The King has this instant received Mr. Addington's note, and as he ever wishes to prevent any delay to public business, will certainly be ready to hold a council at the Queen's Palace, to-morrow, at three o'clock. He therefore authorises Mr. Addington to give notice for assembling the council at that hour.

"GEORGE R."

The message determined upon at the above council was delivered to parliament on the 8th, and taken into consideration on the 9th of March; and on the following day a second message was presented, recommending the calling out of the militia, and the addition of 10,000 men to the naval force of the country.* Addresses, thanking the King for these messages, and cordially agreeing to the vigorous measures proposed in them, were unanimously adopted in both Houses, and were received by his Majesty with feelings of satisfaction, which he expressed to Mr. Addington in the following note, dated —

"Queen's Palace, March 9th.

"The King is much pleased to find, by Mr. Addington's note, that the address of the Commons has been voted without a dissenting voice, as it gives weight without doors to the steps that have been taken.

"GEORGE R."

Mr. Adolphus, to whose full and accurate state-

* The reason assigned for these preparations, namely, that armaments were preparing in the different ports of France, is stated by Sir Walter Scott to have been incorrect; and certainly it appeared afterwards that ministers had been misinformed on this point; the preparations at Helvoetsluys and elsewhere having been shown to have been intended only for the colonies in the West Indies. Unfortunately there remained other grounds, fully sufficient to justify the message, after this one had been removed.

ment of the causes of dissension between the two governments the author finds very little to add, has remarked, that in discussing the second message repecting the augmentation of the naval and military forces, a considerable manifestation of hostile spirit was displayed by Mr. Francis, Mr. Canning, and other speakers, who expressed "general want of confidence in ministers, but without pointing out any particular grounds of complaint. The conduct of government, however, was ably defended by Mr. Addington and Lord Hawkesbury."

Although the ministers, in presenting the King's messages to parliament, were careful to observe that the measures therein recommended were only precautionary, and by no means directed to offensive operations; still they were generally regarded as the forerunners of war. So strongly was Lord Nelson's mind impressed with this idea, that on the day upon which the address was proposed in the House of Peers, he left his seat in that assembly, whilst he wrote the following unique but characteristic offer of his services to Mr. Addington: —

"House of Lords, 4 o'clock, March 9th, 1803.

"Whenever it is necessary, I am *your* Admiral.

"NELSON AND BRONTE."

It need not here be mentioned, with what entire satisfaction this offer was received, and at the proper time accepted. Mr. Speaker Abbot has recorded in his diary, that "no discussion of importance took place in parliament between the 11th of March and the 6th of May — the public remaining in suspense as to the issue of the question with France." Mean-

while, the Minister, being determined, that neither the honour nor the safety of the country should suffer in his hands, was seriously preparing to meet the First Consul in arms. One of his measures was the attempt, related in the last chapter, to obtain for his Majesty, the services of Mr. Pitt; on which subject, the Duke of Queensberry, writing to Sir John Macpherson, on the 15th of March, expressed himself in the following terms: —

"I am for no changes. Government is wise, prudent, and dispassionate; with perfect ability to determine what is fit to be done, and to defend it. Changes will only increase ill humour. * * * If Mr. Addington cannot get us out of the scrape, I believe the thing cannot be done, and we must fight for our country. Those that are out always dislike those that are in power; and more so now than ever, because they do not know where to find fault, or how to vent their envy, without making themselves ridiculous, which I think they have done already. Pitt and Dundas are too wise, and have too much honour to oppose Mr. Addington's government, which I never can believe they will do, until I see it. * * *

"QUEENSBERRY."

We now revert, for further details of the rupture, to the official papers: — On the 10th of March, General Andreossi, in a very proper note, obeyed the instructions he had received, to "require from the British government some explanations respecting the protracted occupation of the island of Malta." Before, however, any reply could be given to this communication, the news of his Majesty's two messages had reached Paris, and occasioned a new and ominous turn in the history of the negotiation. Lord Whitworth, on waiting on M. Talleyrand, on the 11th of March, to communicate the intelligence, found him already ap-

prised of it, and learnt from him, how deeply the First Consul was offended at the suspicions, which his Majesty's government entertained of him, as implied by this proceeding. On the same day, M. Talleyrand communicated to his Lordship, a "note verbale," in which were enumerated several steps, highly injurious and hostile to the interests of Great Britain, which "it was natural," it stated, for the First Consul to take, "if he did not receive satisfactory explanation respecting these armaments in England." This document indicated, indeed, disappointment and irritation, but by no means prepared Lord Whitworth for the extraordinary scene which occurred on his attending the court at the Tuilleries, on Sunday the 13th of March, when the First Consul upbraided his Lordship for the supposed hostile disposition of his government before the whole assembled company, in terms highly irritating and indecorous. On the 17th of March, Lord Whitworth complained to M. Talleyrand of this treatment, and stated, that unless he received from him an assurance that such conduct would not be repeated, he should be under the necessity of discontinuing his visits to the Tuilleries. The assurance, thus required, was readily given, and this subject of irritation, therefore, like its predecessors, was carried no farther. Another collateral difficulty now arose, in consequence of the French minister at Hamburgh, M. Rheinhardt, having published in the gazette of that town "a gross and unwarrantable libel on his Majesty's government."* This act, however,

* In this document the following expressions are applied to the King's message of the 8th of March: — "Bad faith: a sworn enmity to the French nation: perfidy; and the desire of openly breaking a solemn treaty."

was immediately disavowed by M. Talleyrand, and every satisfaction promised; the dispute therefore again subsided into the single question of the possession of Malta. On this point, several propositions were interchanged, during the months of March and April; one of which, to the effect, that his Britannic Majesty should retain his troops at Malta for ten years; that the island of Lampedosa should be ceded to him in full possession, and that the French troops should evacuate Holland, Lord Whitworth fully expected would be accepted: eventually, however, they were all evaded or rejected by the First Consul, which induced his Lordship, on the 20th of April, to request to be furnished with the ultimatum of his government. This, which did not vary from the proposal recently described reached Lord Whitworth on the 26th, and was delivered by him to M. Talleyrand, on the same day, coupled with an intimation, that if no convention on that basis should be agreed upon, within eight days, he had orders to terminate his mission, and to return to London. A week of the prescribed period had expired, and Lord Whitworth was preparing to leave Paris on the following day, when his departure was delayed, by a fresh proposition on the part of the First Consul, namely, that Malta should be placed in the hands of Russia. This, however, was declined by the British cabinet, on the grounds, first, that it was impracticable, from the refusal of the Emperor of Russia to undertake the charge; and, secondly, that it was wholly inadequate to his Majesty's just pretensions. It was now evident to Lord Whitworth, that no advantage could be gained by his farther stay. He therefore demanded his passports on the 12th of

May, and on the same day instructions were sent to General Andreossi to return to France. On the 18th of May his Majesty published a very able declaration, recapitulating all the circumstances which had led to the rupture, and vindicating his own conduct during the negotiations. On the same day, war with France was formally proclaimed; and thus, to his severe mortification, Mr. Addington submitted to the necessity of himself putting an end to that peace, which, only a year and sixteen days before, he had, with so much difficulty, procured for his country and the world. The conduct of the British ministry in this long and difficult transaction was variously censured by contemporaries. Mr. Windham's party blamed them for clinging too tenaciously to peace; Mr. Fox's for plunging too readily into war: viewing the circumstances at this distance of time, the author cannot but think that, considering the magnitude, delicacy, and indefinite nature of the question submitted to their decision, they preserved, as nearly as possible, the proper mean. He has endeavoured to describe faithfully the various causes of the rupture, and it certainly appears to him impossible to peruse them, without perceiving by which party the bulk of the provocations was offered. The First Consul, in truth, throughout the dispute, had but two causes of complaint, and those merely nominal: one, the attacks of the press, which he partly brought upon himself, and which the British constitution afforded no means of preventing; the other, the retention of Malta, contrary to the tenth article of the treaty; and this was only done, as a compensation for, and altogether in consequence of, his own virtual evasions of the spirit of the treaty, by encroaching

upon the state of possession subsisting on the Continent at the time of its signature. Those encroachments were pronounced by Mr. Pitt, as early as the 10th of November, 1802*, to embrace "abundant grounds for justifying the withholding such of the restitutions as had not then taken place;" and they afterwards increased to such an extent, that none but a disputant of extreme hardihood would now maintain, that at the period of the rupture, Bonaparte was not the real violator of the objects and purport of the terms of agreement, although Great Britain was compelled, by unavoidable circumstances, to depart, in appearance, from the letter thereof. "At common law," as Sir Walter Scott has happily described the position of the two countries, "England was bound to redeem her engagement, by restoring the conquered possessions; but in equity she had a good defence."

The King's declaration has enumerated fourteen specific grounds of complaint†, which could justly be

* See his letter of that date to Mr. Addington, Vol. II. chap. xvii. p. 87.

† The nature and magnitude of these grievances may be understood from the following enumeration of them taken from the King's declaration: —

1. Increased severity of the prohibitions on the commerce of British subjects.

2. Violence offered to British vessels and property in French ports.

3. Refusal of justice to the parties so aggrieved.

4. Giving no satisfactory answer to repeated applications from the English ambassador on these subjects.

5. Sending over commercial agents to the principal sea-ports of England without their having been acknowledged or privileged by any commercial treaty.

6. The letter of 17th November, 1802, from Citizen Talleyrand to Citizen Fauvelet, one of these agents, at Dublin.

alleged against the First Consul, in answer to his one simulated grievance respecting the press; and, as regarded the reciprocation of those friendly acts by which Christian nations are wont to cultivate amongst one another the seeds of benevolence and civilisation, the former had infinitely the advantage. The latter, indeed, in his written communications, usually propounded his views with plausibility and apparent candour; and the fact of his being able to lay his finger on the tenth article of the treaty and call for its fulfilment, afforded him easy means of stating his

7. The continuance of a French army in Holland against the will of the Batavian government, and in defiance of the letter of three solemn treaties.

8. The invasion of Switzerland contrary to the treaty of Luneville.

9. The annexation to France of Piedmont, Parma, Placentia, and the island of Elba, without assigning any provision to the King of Sardinia, as France had engaged with the Emperor of Russia to do.

10. The assertion of the principle, so contrary to the law of nations, that his Majesty had no right to complain of the conduct or interfere with the proceedings of France on any point which did not form a part of the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens.

11. The hostile views of France respecting Egypt and the Levant, as manifested in Colonel Sebastiani's published report, contrary to the eighth and ninth articles of the treaty of Amiens, which stipulated the integrity of the Turkish empire, and the independence of the Ionian islands.

12. The indignity and provocation offered to Great Britain in the First Consul's address to the legislative body, which stated, amongst other things, that "England could not singly contend against the power of France."

13. The conduct and language of the First Consul to the English ambassador at his audience.

14. The conduct of the French minister at Hamburgh insisting, in his official capacity, on the insertion in a Hamburgh paper of a gross and opprobrious libel against his Majesty.

case to advantage; but in all his proceedings, from the termination to the recommencement of hostilities, we do not find a single instance in which he displayed towards this country either generosity or conciliation. He evaded all pecuniary or territorial compensation to the House of Orange: he would not listen to a single claim, however reasonable, of British subjects against the French government: he would enter into no commercial treaty with this country, and allow no reciprocity of trade; insomuch that when British vessels entered the ports of France, either through stress of weather or for the lawful purchase of commodities, they were most unjustly seized and confiscated: in every instance, in short, where he might have been expected to display a liberal disposition towards us, his conduct was marked by meanness and selfishness; and to crown the whole, the moment war was declared, for the sake of avenging what he considered an act of *national* injustice, he consigned to a cruel captivity of eleven years, at Verdun, several thousands of inoffensive individuals who had intrusted themselves to the honour and hospitality of France, and were amicably admiring her grandeur, participating in her enjoyments, and, by their expenditure, contributing to her prosperity.* On the other hand, England exhibited during the peace

* The miserable excuse pleaded by Bonaparte for this outrage was, that two French traders had been detained by British privateers before the final declaration of war. On the return of General Andreossi to Paris from his embassy to London, the First Consul is reported to have said to him, "Eh bien, mon Général, que dit on en Angleterre de la détention de leurs compatriotes?" "Ils disent," replied General Andreossi, "que c'est une grande infamie; et ils ont raison."

numerous proofs of her desire to cultivate amicable relations with France: for instance, she immediately satisfied every just demand which French subjects could make against her; she permitted the expedition to St. Domingo to sail from the French ports before the signature of the definitive treaty; she completed the restitution of the Cape of Good Hope, at the very moment when France was perpetrating her unjust invasion of Switzerland, and she prosecuted Peltier to conviction, at the public expense, for his libellous attacks on the First Consul.

On these grounds, then, it may be confidently asserted that any accusation against Mr. Addington's memory for having precipitated the war must, when fairly examined, fall to the ground. Neither was the opposite charge, that he had bid too high for peace, in any degree better founded. In persevering in the restitution of the conquered colonies, notwithstanding Bonaparte's earlier aggressions, he fully carried out the advice of Mr. Pitt's important letter of the 10th of November, by "contenting himself with a state of increased and constant preparation, and thus laying the foundation of a defensive system in Europe, rather than by involving ourselves in a separate war only for the advantage of carrying it on with these possessions still in our hands." Moreover, although the aggregate of the First Consul's objectionable proceedings at length left Great Britain no other alternative than resistance; each separate aggression did not so obviously amount to a "casus belli," as to make it impossible to overlook it without dishonour; and the Prime Minister was therefore at liberty to take the whole circumstances of the country

into consideration, and to select that moment for making his stand which might appear best suited to the purpose; and, considering the prosperity which the nation was then enjoying, especially as regarded its finances, no more prudent decision could surely have been adopted, than, whilst making full preparations for hostilities, to defer their actual renewal as long as possible.

We now return to Mr. Abbot's narrative of the circumstances which came under his observation at this eventful crisis.

"*May* 16*th.* This morning, at seven, General Andreossi left London. A council was held at two at the Queen's House, when a message to parliament was signed by the King, and letters of marque and reprisal against France were ordered to be issued. The message was delivered in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and this day se'nnight fixed for taking it into consideration. Some observations were made by Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey upon the silence of the message in respect of the letters of marque and reprisal; but all discussion of the question of peace or war was reserved till the papers should be laid before the House, which Lord Hawkesbury assured Mr. Grenville would contain all the discussions, at least all the material ones, between this country and France subsequently to the treaty of Amiens."

"*May* 20*th.* House of Commons. Mr. Pitt took his seat for the first time in this parliament. He told me he thought the debate not likely to be long on Monday, if confined to the question of war with France, though, to be sure, if all the points in all the papers of correspondence were to be gone into, there could be no saying where it would end. He very civilly congratulated me on my situation, and said he had been a long time truant. He did not stay the debate of the day. Lord Hawkesbury brought up the papers ordered yesterday, and a long and desultory conversation took place on a great variety of points. Mr. Grey, in the course of it, said, that 'as we were now at war upon the question of sup-

porting the crown, there could be but one opinion, whatever might have been the conduct or misconduct of ministers.' The great charge against them, upon this and the preceding day, was the want of written documents to show the formal and official remonstrances against the aggressions of France, and the formal and official answers to them on the part of that government; and it was strongly urged, that the points in the correspondence and those stated in the King's declaration had been left too much to verbal conference."

Upon the day on which the above memoranda were penned, the following very different opinion from that described therein was addressed to Mr. Addington by "his own admiral," whom the same promptitude and energy, which had *urged the Channel fleet to sea two days before war was declared*, enabled to sail for his command in the Mediterranean in his favourite "Victory," four hours after the date of this letter.

"My dear Sir, May 20th, noon, Victory,

* * * †I have only to sincerely hope that a manly spirit will show itself in Great Britain and Ireland, and in that case I really feel that Bonaparte will be shook from his high situation. *The correspondence is certainly much in our favour.* It so strongly marks the hatred of Bonaparte to this country, and his dread, and his views on Egypt, that every man must be satisfied of the necessity of the war. I think I see every thing favourable for us, and nothing against us. Wishing you, my dear Sir, health and every happiness, believe me ever, your most attached and faithful friend,

"NELSON AND BRONTE.

"To the Right Honourable Henry Addington."

These sentiments were repeated in the postscript of another letter written from Admiral Cornwallis's

† The former part of this letter is published in the "Dispatches."

rendezvous off Brest, on the 23d of May, the day of the debate in parliament on the King's message relative to the discussions with France.

"I trust," the hero observes, "that the true English spirit will show itself to-day in supporting your conduct. From the correspondence, it is clear to me that we have done every thing possible to preserve peace consistent with the honour of the crown and country. We are neither precipitated rashly into a war, nor have waited to be trampled upon, which was clearly the intention of Bonaparte; and he expected that we should submit, and, I am sure, is alarmed at our resistance to his will, and dreads the event.* That he may have reason to repent of his rashness, insolence, and folly, is the fervent prayer, and shall be the strenuous endeavour of

"N. AND B.

"Right Honourable Henry Addington."

That these admirable sentiments were re-echoed by all Mr. Addington's correspondents, will be readily imagined. It will be sufficient, therefore, to present, as a specimen of the whole, a single passage from the letter of his friend Le Mesurier, dated May 20th.

"I must express my very great satisfaction at the contents of the papers laid before parliament. The firmness and moderation, the temperate and dignified spirit with which you have resisted the extravagant demands of Bonaparte, deserve all praise. Whatever men may think of the late peace, they must be satisfied, that having made it (and it was made with the full approbation of a vast majority of the nation), you

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* Lord Sidmouth used to describe the manner in which Lord Nelson, during these discussions, explained to him his ideas of the proper mode of negotiating with the First Consul. "It matters not at all," he said, taking up the poker, "in what way I lay this poker on the floor. But if Bonaparte should say it *must* be placed in this direction" (suiting the action to the word), "we must instantly insist on its being laid in some other one."

could not have acted more consistently, or with more propriety. Perhaps even those who most disapproved that measure may be brought to see that it was not unwise to try the experiment, and that the restless and ambitious spirit of Bonaparte would not have been made so manifest, or the nation so firmly united as I trust it now will be."

The opinion of the national council had now to be pronounced upon these important proceedings, and this shall be introduced to the reader by the following preface extracted from Mr. Abbot's diary: —

"*May* 22*d.* Saw Mr. Addington, and the draft of address as prepared by Lord P.; Mr. Addington not approving of this, sat down and wrote another, which seemed to answer its intended purpose. Mr. Addington had not seen Mr. Pitt, nor was there any probability of it. Mr. Pitt was expected to leave town on Tuesday next, after the debate. A division is scarcely expected, as the address is to put the question only upon the cause of England against France. Lord Hawkesbury to go up to the House of Lords immediately after these questions. In the evening saw Mr. Addington again, who said the address had undergone some alterations, and been improved."

"*May* 24*th.* House of Commons. Adjourned debate on the address. Divided at 3 in the morning. For Mr. Grey's amendment, 67; against it, 398. In the debate, Mr. Fox spoke from 10 to 1; and, in these three hours, delivered a speech of more art, eloquence, wit, and mischief, than I ever remember to have heard from him. His principles were rather protested against than answered by the Attorney General and Mr. Windham." *

* Mr. Fox lived to see his opinions on the subject of war and peace greatly modified "by the circumstances of Europe." "I am ready to confess," he said in the debate of April 3d, 1806, "that I have been weaned from the opinions which I formerly held with respect to the force which must suffice in time of peace, because I see no rational prospect of any peace that would exempt us from the necessity of watchful preparation and powerful establishments."

The above sketch of the debate, though it proceeded from the high authority of the Speaker himself, requires a slight filling up from other sources.

The address, which fully admitted the endeavours of his Majesty to preserve to his people the blessings of peace, approved of the causes assigned for the war, spoke with indignation of the aggressions of France, and expressed a full determination to co-operate with his Majesty in calling forth the resources of the kingdom, was moved by Lord Hawkesbury, and supported by Mr. Erskine. Mr. Pitt then rose and spoke in favour of the address; but Mr. Abbot does not mention the reason why this speech, which probably was the most powerful one which Mr. Pitt ever delivered, was not fully reported. The truth was, that the Speaker, to accommodate the members of committees who crowded in to hear their old favourite, placed them in the gallery usually appropriated to the reporters, who were thus inconveniently crowded, and agreed, in retaliation, not to report the speech. Enough of it, however, has been preserved to show Mr. Pitt's deliberate and fixed opinion that the conduct of France had been fully sufficient to justify his Majesty in resorting to hostilities. "Upon the great and important question at issue," he said, "between this country and France, and upon the justice and necessity of the grounds on which we were compelled to enter into the war, he thought it impossible that the House should not be unanimous. As regarded Malta, we were fully warranted in retaining it for our own security. He equally approved of the conduct of the ministers with respect to the violence offered to Switzerland; and after taking a masterly review of the

other subjects of complaint enumerated in the King's declaration, he concluded with a full admission of the reasonableness and validity of them all. Mr. Pitt was followed by Mr. Wilberforce, who appears to have given way on this occasion to one of his unaccountable gusts of displeasure against Mr. Addington, and who "denied that his Majesty's government had uniformly endeavoured to preserve to their country the blessings of peace. He strongly disapproved of the conduct of the government respecting Malta; complained of the King's message of the 8th of March as a measure calculated to create a breach between the two countries, and finally expressed an opinion that the conduct of the administration was unwarrantable in exposing the kingdom to the risk of war for the sake of the liberties of Switzerland." * At the close of the evening's debate, Mr. Grey, "acknowledging the necessity of resisting the encroachments of France, yet with a view to leave an opening for accommodation," moved an amendment, which, whilst it pledged the House to call forth the resources of the kingdom for the vigorous prosecution of the war, omitted all mention of the overbearing conduct of France, and of the steps taken in consequence by his Majesty, and "thanked his

* These sentiments elicited no approbation either within or without the walls of parliament, and they singularly contrast with an accusation against Mr. Addington of a totally opposite tendency, with which Mr. Wilberforce's diary and correspondence of this period overflow, namely, the not engaging in the war with sufficient spirit. Both charges were equally unfounded. Indeed, Mr. Wilberforce appears himself to have regretted his language in these instances respecting his friend, for he has truly observed in one place, "*I have not been considerate or kind enough towards Addington.*"

Majesty for the readiness he expressed to afford every facility to any just arrangement for restoring to his subjects the blessing of peace."

The debate was resumed on the following evening by Mr. T. Grenville, between whose extreme opinions on one side, and those of Mr. Wilberforce on the other, the truth, of necessity, lay; and as both those gentlemen agreed in bestowing about an equal degree of censure on the measures of government, it is reasonable to conclude that Mr. Addington had discovered as nearly as possible the happy mean, and was pursuing the only advisable course. Mr. Addington himself spoke, and that with considerable effect, on the second evening; but as the grounds of his conduct, which were also those of his justification, have already been fully recorded in this chapter, the insertion of his speech is deemed unnecessary. Nothing could have more clearly explained the sentiments of the nation on the renewal of the war than the triumphant majority on this occasion. By the wording of the proposed address, the ministers were placed on trial upon a single, but most important, question, the renewal of the war; and as regarded that, they were acquitted by acclamation. On the day after the division, Mr. Addington received the congratulations of his approving and gratified master, which were expressed in the following terms: —

"Queen's Palace, May 25th, 1803.

"The King sees with pleasure that on the division this morning upon the amendment of Mr. Grey to the address moved by Lord Hawkesbury, the *pros* were 67, and the *cons* 398; and the main question consequently carried without a division. So large a majority is a most favourable event at

the onset of the business, and will probably have effect in not making the two oppositions, when joined on some question, so large as they may expect: indeed, with firmness, there cannot be the least doubt that the contest will be successful for government.

"The King fears Mr. Addington must have been fatigued with the debate having continued two days; and perhaps the report this day may make others speak, who, being prepared, will choose to produce their talents; and, indeed, if that was not the case, the House of Commons would not be so often detained, as has for some years been the custom.

"GEORGE R."

It now only remains to add Mr. Addington's own revised and deliberate sentiments on this subject, extracted from his MS. notes to Mr. Le Mesurier's pamphlet of 1807, already alluded to.* "The conduct of France towards Switzerland; the language of its official journal; the speech of his Majesty from the throne at the meeting of the new parliament in 1802, and the measures of government for placing the country in a state of security, prepared the public for the renewal of hostilities, which took place in the spring of 1803. The debates and divisions in the two Houses of Parliament, particularly in the House of Commons, on the motions of Mr. Pitt and Colonel Patten, afford the most decisive proofs of the approbation bestowed by parliament on his Majesty's ministers at that trying conjuncture. Knowing that

* The reader will observe, that these notes were originally intended by Lord Sidmouth as a sort of explanatory supplement to a pamphlet, which was withheld from publication at his request, and are therefore written, like the pamphlet itself, in the third person. This, however, does not in the least detract from their authenticity.

no situation could be more calamitous than that of renewed hostilities, without the ardent support of the great body of the people, they unquestionably carried forbearance to an extreme, which proved their earnest wish for the preservation of peace. But this forbearance was mingled with many instances of remonstrance, and of vindication of the rights and honour of the country; and, as was asserted by Lord Hawkesbury, there was not to be found in their conduct a single instance of concession. As the storm approached, they prepared to meet it with vigour. The message to the two Houses of Parliament, on the 8th of March, was instantly followed by the issue of press warrants, by the calling out and embodying the militia, and by the utmost activity in every department in the naval and military service. On the 16th of May the certainty of hostilities was announced; and on the same day, in consequence of an order by the telegraph, Admiral Cornwallis put to sea, and appeared off Brest on the morning of the 18th. Never was public spirit more universally and ardently displayed. The supplementary militia were instantly called out, and on the 1st of July there were 70,000 militia actually embodied. By these means our preparations for defence greatly outstripped those of the enemy for attack; and in a few weeks after the commencement of the war, such was the confidence of the country in the measures which had been adopted, that the boastings, the menaces, and the armaments of the enemy, were only regarded with contempt."

CHAPTER XX.

1803.

Letter from Sir William Scott on the Clergy Residence Bill. Reassemblage of Parliament. Prince of Wales's Debts. King's Message of 8th of March. No important Business in the House until May. Offered Resignation by Earl St. Vincent. Dr. Burgess made Bishop of St. David's. Death of Lord Rivers — His Legacy to Mr. Addington. Debate on Mr. Fox's Motion respecting Mediation of Russia. Debates on the Mode of arming the Country, and the Budget. Lord Bexley's Statement of Mr. Addington's financial Measures on the breaking out of the War — Further Remarks on this Subject. War with Holland. Additional Force Bill. Bill for calling out the Male Population in event of Invasion. Mr. Windham's Opinion of the Militia. Rebellion in Ireland. Murder of Lord Kilwarden. Letters from Lord Redesdale. Bills for suspending Habeas Corpus, and establishing Martial Law in Ireland. Letter from Mr. Addington to Lord Hardwicke.

ATTENTION must now be recalled to Mr. Addington's miscellaneous correspondence, which has been allowed to fall in arrear, through the necessity of tracing to their conclusion the important subjects considered in the last two chapters. It will be remembered that the personal narrative has been conducted only to the commencement of 1803, when, in addition to the negotiation with France, and his position as regarded Mr. Pitt, the Premier had upon his mind the trial of Despard and his associates, the augmentation of the army and navy, hourly increasing difficulties in Ireland, and the approaching assemblage of parliament.

It is not surprising, then, that Sir William Scott, on the 16th of January, should have found it necessary to remind him that "time pressed for some determination respecting the Clergy Residence Bill; on which subject, unless it were to be brought forward as a measure of government, with all the countenance and energy that could be given to it, he was quite hopeless that any endeavours of his own could produce any thing but disappointment." Mr. Addington's reply has not been preserved; but it is well known that he afforded the requisite encouragement to his learned friend, who, under the sanction of government, introduced his bill for "the Relief of Spiritual Persons" into the House of Commons on the 6th of April. This measure, important as the first step in the right direction towards promoting the residence of the clergy on their benefices, was objected to, in the Commons, by Sir Francis Burdett, as giving too much power to the bishops, and in the Lords, by Bishop Horsley, on more elaborate grounds, but was passed nevertheless by great majorities, and received the royal assent on the 7th of July.*

The first act of the united parliament, which reassembled early in February, was to renew the prohibition to the Bank of England against payments in specie, until six weeks after the commencement of the next session of parliament. Mr. Addington pro-

* The present, which was styled "An Act to amend the Laws relating to spiritual Persons, and for enforcing Residence," was, it is believed, the first act which imposed statutable penalties for non-residence. Its provisions have since been extended, as to curates, by the 53 Geo. III. c. 149., and as to the clergy generally, by 57 Geo. III. c. 99., and by the 1 & 2 Vic. c. 106., now in force.

posed this measure to the Commons on the 7th of February, as one with which he would gladly have dispensed, had not circumstances rendered it indispensable. It passed through both Houses without serious opposition, and became a law on the 28th of February.

The next subject which engaged the attention of parliament was his Majesty's message, recommending the pecuniary affairs of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to favourable consideration. When proposing an address in reply to this communication, Mr. Addington, on the 23d of February, moved that his Majesty should be enabled to settle an annuity of 60,000*l.* on the Prince of Wales until the 5th day of July, 1806, by which time it was calculated that the provision formerly made for the payment of his Royal Highness's debts out of his income would have effected that object. Much debate ensued; but the resolution, as described above, was at length carried, it being understood that the Prince fully relinquished all claim on the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall. Before this question was finally settled, the ominous 8th of March arrived; on which day the King's message recommending military and naval preparations put an end, according to Mr. Speaker Abbot's diary, already quoted, to "any further transaction of important business in parliament until the beginning of May." During that interval the private correspondence presents but one letter which it is deemed advisable to notice in this place. It is a letter of resignation, dated March 30th, addressed to Mr. Addington by Lord St. Vincent, in which his Lordship observed, that "he should deem it highly improper were he to continue longer at the head of a depart-

ment on which so much depended, in the very precarious state of his health, and that the sooner his successor was appointed, the more he should feel obliged." It must have been extremely discouraging to the Prime Minister, at such a period, to find the firm and energetic mind of Lord St. Vincent recoiling from the difficulties and responsibilities of his station. There is nothing to show by what means Mr. Addington obtained the abandonment of an intention, which, if persisted in, would have so much increased his own embarrassments; but the fact is known to all, that his Lordship did not resign.

The miscellaneous transactions contain nothing worthy of record, at this period, except that the demise of Lord George Murray, the respected Bishop of St. David's, afforded Mr. Addington an opportunity of proving his disinterested regard for the best interests of the church, by selecting as successor in that see Dr. Burgess, a clergyman without interest or connexion, solely on the recommendation of personal character. This appointment led to Mr. Addington's receiving the following just compliment from Dr. Randolph, afterwards Bishop of London, who appears, from one expression in the note, to have been interested in behalf of some other expectant on this occasion: —

"Monday night.

"Perhaps, Sir, *I* may be allowed to think you might have made a *better* choice; but such men as Dr. Huntingford and Dr. Burgess do honour both to your head and heart. Such disposal of ecclesiastical preferment must insure you the praise of the wise and good."

Another dignitary who was raised to the prelacy at

this period was Dr. Fisher, for many years the assiduous preceptor of the Princess Charlotte of Wales.

On the 7th of May, in this year, Lord Rivers, one of Mr. Addington's most attached friends, and warmest supporters, died at his seat, at Stratfieldsay. His Lordship had been originally the patient, and, as in the instance of Lord Chatham, subsequently the intimate friend, of Dr. Addington; and on the death of the father, he had transferred his affection to the son. The correspondence contains several admirable letters from his Lordship, which the author has not excluded from this work without regret. He left, as a legacy to Mr. Addington, a valuable set of the classics, consisting of above one hundred volumes, which was announced in the following letter from the Rev. C. F. Brooke, one of the executors *: —

"Sir, "Stratfieldsay, June 26th, 1803.

"I am commissioned by Lord Rivers to transmit to you a set of the classics—'cum notis variorum'—in consequence of a bequest of his late excellent father. As I had the happiness of passing much of my time in the society of that admirable man for some years past, I trust I may be allowed to lament that I have no longer an opportunity of observing in him the progressive operation of more talent, more wisdom, more virtue, than are allotted to humanity in general. The world, which knew but little of his real character, will, perhaps, hesitate in subscribing to these sentiments; but you,

* This bequest was conveyed in the following extract from a codicil to his Lordship's will, dated December 10th, 1801, a copy of which had been transmitted to Mr. Addington at the time the codicil was added: —

"I give unto my valued friend, the Right Hon. Henry Addington, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, my edition of the classics, 'cum notis variorum,' as a memorial of my sincere esteem and regard."

Sir, who valued him as he deserved, will bear ample testimony to their truth, and will regret that such talents and such virtues should have been exercised in private only."

The author now resumes his notice of the transactions in parliament. The evening of the 27th of May produced an interesting debate on Mr. Fox's motion, to request his Majesty "to avail himself of the disposition expressed by the Emperor of Russia to interpose his good offices for the termination of the present war."

In his speech, on this occasion, Mr. Fox, nobly postponing party feelings to those of patriotism, propounded sentiments which elicited the warm approbation both of Mr. Pitt and Lord Hawkesbury; and although there were obvious reasons why the adoption of Mr. Fox's motion would, probably, have counteracted the good effects to be expected from his speech, still, the government felt no hesitation in assuring the House of its readiness to accept the mediation of Russia.

No result, however, followed this well-intended measure; and the ministers, the parliament, and the people, now applied themselves zealously, and unanimously, to the duty of preparing to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour.

The attention of parliament, therefore, during the remainder of the session, was chiefly occupied by subjects of this nature. Such was the case, on the 6th of June, when Mr. Yorke, the Secretary at War, in bringing forward part of the army estimates, explained the intention of government to propose only a small augmentation of the regular forces, and to make the principal increase in the militia and volunteers.

To this Mr. Windham objected, that "the measures

of government tended to create a *militia*, not an *army*," and spoke disparagingly of the former description of force. Mr. Pitt also "seemed to consider the number of militia to bear too large a proportion to the whole of the army.*

Mr. Addington, in reply to Mr. Pitt, admitted that a war wholly defensive was not advisable; but added, that "a considerable defensive force was at present necessary, in consequence of the extensive preparations of the enemy. The time might come, when circumstances would point out the necessity of giving the war a more offensive character. At present, attention must be paid to the defence of the country; and for this purpose, he relied, not only on the militia, but on the yeomanry and volunteers also, as a subsidiary force, in aid of the regular army."

To supply the means of these gigantic efforts, great pecuniary sacrifices were necessarily required; and these, it was Mr. Addington's peculiar duty, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to suggest and enforce. Accordingly, "on the 13th of June," he "opened his war budget to the House of Commons, in a speech of two hours, at the close of which, no member offered a single observation. Mr. Pitt was present." On the 14th was "the report of the budget, Mr. Pitt again present, but said nothing. Many members spoke upon

* These statesmen did not sufficiently calculate the effects of the advantageous footing on which the militia was now placed; and their language probably would have been very different could they have foreseen the services which, in the impending struggle, this constitutional description of force was destined to render in feeding, and, to a great extent, constituting that army which, after wresting the Peninsula from the grasp of France, won for Europe a thirty years' peace on the field of Waterloo.

the whole budget, and several of its articles, in a desultory debate of three hours, *but with general approbation of the plan.*" *

The above representation of the favour with which Mr. Addington's labours, on this occasion, were received, is confirmed from every other source of information to which access has been obtained; but as the speech, with all other proceedings of this session, has been very indifferently reported, instead of attempting to make an abstract, the author deems it preferable to insert a description of the measures to which it related, derived from that sure and friendly source to which his reader is already indebted for the financial history of the two preceding years.

Mr. Addington was now called upon to provide for the expenses of a war, of which no human intellect could foresee either the event, the duration, or the cost. It was to be commenced without the expectation of an ally, and with the immediate prospect of an invasion from the most formidable military power in the world.

The wisdom of the measures he had introduced in the preceding year were now evident. The income tax had been freed from encumbrance, and repealed; and might now be brought forward, as a fresh resource, either in its former shape, or in any other that might be deemed more advisable. Mr. Addington, on full consideration, resolved to new-model it entirely, and to reproduce it as a property tax. The income tax, as proposed in 1799, was charged at the rate of 10 per cent. (with certain exemptions and modifications)

* Mr. Abbot's diary.

upon the net income of all persons, making a return of 60*l.* a year and upwards, in a form circulated by the Tax Office, without specifying (unless specially called upon to do so) the sources from which that income was derived. The commissioners had indeed the power, which, however, was rarely exercised, to swear the party, to the amount of his income; but this oath was final and conclusive.

It is obvious, that this mode of rating was open to great evasions, and to many deficiencies, arising not only from intentional fraud, but also from the errors and misunderstandings of ignorant and ill-educated persons, in the interpretation of a long and complicated paper; and that the mistakes would usually be in favour of the party concerned, and, except in very gross cases, would escape further inquiry. The consequence was, that the tax estimated at ten millions did not, on an average, produce more than five.*

The new plan adopted by Mr. Addington proceeded upon a totally different principle. Instead of calling upon the payer to discover his income, unless it arose from trade or professions which could not be otherwise charged, every source of income was to be assessed at its origin; as, for example, landed property

* The following distinctions existed between Mr. Addington's tax and that introduced by Mr. Pitt:—"The former was nearly twice as productive. The mode of collecting it was much easier; and that character of vexatious exposure which belonged to the latter was entirely avoided, except in cases of professional incomes. The former also operated on an assessment of 120,000,000*l.*, the latter on one of 80,000,000*l.* The former was paid by upwards of 600,000 persons, the latter by about 340,000."—*Lord Sidmouth's MS. Notes.*

in the hands of the tenant, with power to deduct it from his rent, dividends on stock, wherever payable, and in the case of interest of money, and other derivative property, to be retained by the debtor, whose whole income would have been previously charged. It is unnecessary, however, to enter here into the details of management, as the tax is now paid under nearly the same regulations.

By this plan, besides greatly increasing the difficulty of evasion, the advantage was gained of removing a very popular objection to the income tax, namely, that of its disclosing the private circumstances of individuals. This had been much complained of under the former income tax; but under the new one, no person can be known to possess any property, not in his personal occupation, except in the cases of trade or professions, the income of which may be privately returned to commissioners sworn to secrecy, as under the former tax; but even in these cases, the party makes no general return of his income, unless for the purpose of claiming an exemption: and all inquiry into mortgages or other encumbrances is entirely avoided.

This plan was exposed to one objection, which was so pressed by Mr. Pitt (July 5th), as greatly to endanger its success. He objected to it as a direct tax upon the funds, and, therefore, a breach of faith with the public creditor. He admitted, that under the former income tax the fundholder paid the same proportion of his income as the owner of any other property; but he contended that the funds were, by law and public faith, exempted from direct taxation. It was answered, that the fundholders were neither

entitled to, nor claimed, an invidious exemption from charges to which all other classes of their fellow-subjects were liable, and that they were at least equally interested in the defence and stability of the country; that they had heretofore cheerfully borne their proportion of the income tax, and that a new mode of collection constituted only an ideal, and not a substantial, difference in the burden. The weight, however, of Mr. Pitt's authority, and some objections made by the Directors of the Bank of England to undertaking the collection of the tax, made it necessary, for the first year, to adopt a more complex and expensive mode of collection. It was, however, admitted, that a charge upon the property of foreigners in the English funds was not equally justifiable; and such property was accordingly exempted.*

* Lord Bexley, writing to the D. of N., "August 11th, 1845," gives the original sketch of Mr. Pitt's income tax:—

"In the autumn of 1798 I received an invitation from Mr. Dundas, desiring me to meet Mr. Pitt at his house at Wimbledon, and pass the night, as Mr. Pitt wished to have some conversation with me on financial subjects. Mr. Pitt came down to dinner. He was in high spirits, and said he was convinced that the aid and contribution tax could not be carried further, and that he was determined to try a direct tax upon income; that he had met some of the principal monied men in Downing Street that morning; that they approved of his plan, and would undertake to farm the tax for 10,000,000*l.*; that he knew such a mode of collection would not be endured in England, but he was sanguine as to the result of the measure. I asked him how he proposed to form the assessment: he said it should be upon the return of every householder's income, making allowances for all incomes under two hundred a year. I said that mode would be open to great evasions, especially if small incomes were to be so much favoured, and that I thought he would find it safer to adopt the principle of the old land tax in King William's time, which included a charge upon personal property. Mr. Pitt said he feared the funds would be an

When the income tax was renewed in 1842, a different course was adopted, without any just cause of complaint, because any foreigner who thought fit might then have withdrawn his capital without loss, and, in most cases, with considerable profit; while, in 1803, he must have sold out at the sacrifice of a large proportion of it. Mr. Pitt likewise objected to the division of the tax into two separate bills: the one for charging the income derived from visible property, and the other for collecting it from trade and other sources known only to the party; which had been adopted simply for its convenience, because the mode of proceeding was very different in the two cases; and he proposed the consolidation of the two bills. To this Mr. Addington consented without difficulty, as it made no difference in the practical working of the measure; and Mr. Pitt's proposition appeared to be favourably received by the House. Mr. Addington thought it advisable to limit the rate of the income

insuperable obstacle to such a plan, as there was a distinct provision in every loan act to exempt them from taxation. I said the same difficulty, in substance, must occur in every income tax, and that the public would not bear a partial exemption of perhaps a fifth of the whole income of the nation; and that if the fundholders were not called upon to contribute to a tax of this kind, the consequences might be injurious to themselves by occasioning a general outcry against the national debt, and produce some violent measure for it reduction. Mr. Pitt replied, that he certainly did not mean that they should be exempted, but that they should be called upon to pay on their dividends as a part of their income. This, I said, would be felt by the stockholders as much as a direct tax; but he persevered in his opinion; and though the subject was renewed after dinner, I do not recollect that any thing remarkable passed. This conversation proves that Mr. Pitt was sincere in the remarks he made on Mr. Addington's tax, and did not speak merely from ill-humour, as many people supposed."

tax, in the first instance, to five per cent.; but he had so much confidence in the new plan, as to estimate its immediate produce at 4,500,000*l.*, or even 200,000*l.* more. He did not, however, rely solely on this resource for raising the large sum which he felt it essential to the support of public credit and the indefinite prosecution of the war to raise within the year, so as to prevent, as much as possible, the accumulation of permanent debt. With this view, he proposed additional duties of customs and excise, to the estimated amount of no less than six millions, or, including the income tax, of ten millions and a half of war taxes; thereby reducing the loan of the year, exclusive of two millions for Ireland, to ten millions. It was, in consequence, contracted for on very favourable terms.

Mr. Addington, in his speech of the 11th of June, explained the principle on which his budget had been constructed. After reminding the committee of the hope expressed by the enemy that he should eventually exhaust the resources of this country by the accumulation of expense, he observed that "his great object was to raise a large part of the supplies within the year. The extent to which he wished to carry this principle was, that there should be no increase whatever of the public debt during the course of the war. To this end, it was necessary to ascertain the probable amount of the annual charges, and then to provide for carrying on a protracted contest without making any greater addition to the public debt than would be annually liquidated by the sinking fund. The annual charge of the war, unless increased by the intervention of continental alliances, he calculated at

26,000,000*l.* If, then, the House should adopt the present measure, and if he was correct in his estimate of the growing produce of the consolidated fund, and in his calculation of the annual taxes, there would only remain the sum of 6,000,000*l.* to be borrowed, which would be more than covered by the sinking fund, amounting to 6,494,000*l.* In this case we should be enabled to meet a war expenditure of 26,000,000*l.* without any increase to the public debt. He trusted, therefore, that this system would be adopted. It would inspire confidence at home, and create respect abroad; it would convince the other powers of Europe that they may safely unite with us in resisting the common enemy, since our resources afforded full security for the punctual discharge of any engagement into which the country might enter: above all, it would convince the enemy of the hopelessness of contending with our finances, and that we were invulnerable in that respect. The records of similar financial efforts, he observed, were to be found in early periods of our history. Taxes were raised within the year on all descriptions of property, descending even to the wages of servants. He would refer, in illustration of this fact, to the times of William and Mary, when the funding system was first introduced: not only was a levy of four shillings in the pound imposed at that time on land, but also two and a half per cent. on stock in trade; five shillings in the pound on all salaries, offices, perquisites, and pensions; and professional persons were charged four shillings for all emoluments whatever resulting from their practice. It was to be recollected that, arduous as those times were, they could not be compared in that

respect with existing circumstances; for the present contest was for the preservation of the country as a free state; and the question now to be decided was no other than this — whether Great Britain should maintain her own independence, or tamely suffer her name to be erased from the list of nations."

On the 17th of June a message was presented to parliament from the King, expressing his Majesty's regret at being obliged to take any step prejudicial to the United Provinces of Holland; but that recent violations of the independence of the Batavian republic by France, and the refusal to withdraw the French forces from that country, had rendered it imperative for him to recall his minister from it, and to issue letters of marque and reprisal. Some particulars of the violations of independence here alluded to by his Majesty were detailed in letters of the 26th and 28th of April, from the English superintendent of the post at Helvoetsluys, which stated that the aide-de-camp of Marshal Victor and some French engineer officers had recently arrived there; had superseded the Batavian military authorities, who had in vain appealed to their government at the Hague; had laid the neighbourhood under requisition, and were actively engaged in arming the batteries, and placing the whole coast in a state of defence.

On the following day another message was presented to parliament from the King, recommending that a large additional force should be forthwith raised for the more effectual defence of the United Kingdom against the avowed designs of the enemy. This was taken into consideration on the 20th of June, when Mr. Yorke, the Secretary at War, proposed

that in addition to the regular and other forces already embodied, an army of reserve, consisting of 50,000 men, should be raised by ballot, to serve four years. This proposition was carried with great unanimity, although Mr. Windham spoke with much disapprobation of the militia system, especially of the indulgence granted of serving by substitute. In the progress of his speech, Mr. Yorke mentioned that there were already 73,000 men in the militia, and that officers could not be found sufficient for the demand. So universal, indeed, was the display of patriotism on this occasion, that, as Mr. Addington had before observed, "the preparations for defence far outstripped those for attack;" in London alone, for instance, before the autumn closed, there were 40,000 volunteers, including 1500 horse, well trained, armed, and equipped.* There is therefore no reason to doubt, that had the First Consul succeeded in landing his 100,000 veterans in England, the same men who ten years afterwards rescued Spain from several times that number of French soldiers, though possessed of the fortresses and country, would have triumphantly defended their native land.

In subsequent debates on the Additional Force Bill, Mr. Windham's objection to raising men by ballot, and his preference of regular troops to this new description of militia, was repeated by other speakers; but Mr. Sheridan, who, as Mr. Addington informed his brother, "came forward most usefully," remarked,

* A striking instance of zeal was displayed at this period by the directors of the Globe Insurance Company, who wrote to Mr. Addington to offer the services of thirty of their firemen, fully equipped and armed for service.

with great truth, that "a compulsory levy of men for the regular regiments was altogether unconstitutional; whereas the country could compel every man to come forward to repel invasion."

In fact, it was impossible to recruit the regular army with the requisite expedition by means of bounties; and consequently the only effectual mode was the one proposed. Mr. Pitt, therefore, approved of the measure, as the best way of raising a large force as speedily as possible; and Mr. Addington, "whilst he deprecated the idea of recruiting our regiments by a species of conscription, as entirely opposed to the liberty of the subject, asserted that it was the calling out the supplementary militia in the last war which had enabled the country to make those exertions which decided the campaign of Egypt."

On the 18th of July, the government brought forward another important portion of their plan of defence, in the shape of a bill for enabling his Majesty to exercise his ancient prerogative of calling, in case of invasion, for the services of his liege subjects. This bill provided for the enrolment and assembling of all men between the ages of 17 and 55 who were capable of serving; and for their being exercised and drilled. This measure, called the Military Service Bill, was received with much approbation by the leaders of parties, and was passed with all practicable expedition into a law. On the 2d of August the defence of the country was again taken into consideration, in consequence of a proposition by Colonel Craufurd for erecting works for the protection of London. A desultory debate followed, in which the usual complaints against the ministers, that they had

neither been prompt in the commencement, nor prudent in the selection of their measures of resistance, were re-echoed, by a very small minority. This charge it was difficult, if not impossible, to answer; because each member's opinion of the adequacy or inadequacy of the preparations depended much upon the accuracy of the information he possessed respecting such preparations, compared with those of the enemy, and still more on the state of his nerves and his personal firmness and fortitude. Certain it is, that the exertions of the country were immense, and that the whole male population of the kingdom was under arms; whilst the risks and difficulties which an invading enemy must encounter were such as to render his success all but impossible.*

Much was said in this debate respecting the refusal to confer on the Prince of Wales higher military rank than that of a colonel. On this subject a long correspondence subsequently occurred between the King, his Royal Highness, and Mr. Addington, which need not be recited here, as it possessed only

* These difficulties were thus ably summed up by Mr. Francis, in the debate under present notice: — "The distance from the ports of Holland and Flanders is considerable. The management of a fleet of three or four hundred vessels, even without being disturbed by an enemy, is very difficult. To such a fleet, crowded with landsmen, the mere chances of the sea would be formidable: a long calm would be a great distress; a gale of wind might be fatal. The wind must not only be favourable, but moderate. A short passage would be essential to success; but then it must blow fresh, which must bring them on a lee shore, where they would find a heavy surf. But suppose them landed on our coast, what sort of an army would it be? Without cavalry, without artillery, except perhaps a few field pieces, and with just as much ammunition and bread as every soldier could carry for his own use."

a temporary interest. On the 10th of August, Mr. Sheridan proposed the thanks of the House to the several volunteer and yeomanry corps for their zeal and readiness, and enforced his motion in a speech replete with patriotic sentiments. The motion was carried, but, strange to say, not without some opposition.

The only remaining question which came before parliament prior to the prorogation on the 12th of August was one upon which the author enters with reluctance—the rebellion in Ireland. There is a valuable series of confidential letters from the Chancellor, Lord Redesdale, to Mr. Addington, describing the distracted state of that unhappy island, from which some extracts must now be given:—

The chief evils of Ireland, his Lordship considered, "resulted from the measures of the government in 1792 and the succeeding years, by which they lost the attachment of the Protestants, without gaining that of the Roman Catholics. The remedy he proposed for this was, to support the Protestant church, by prevailing on the bishops and clergy to come manfully forward, and exert themselves to make that which was established superior also in weight and influence; to introduce law and order into the country; to render it safe for a Protestant to reside wherever he pleased, and to afford him the means of freely exercising his religion wherever he may reside." These objects might be accomplished if England would really exert herself; and until they were so, "Ireland, under the most favourable circumstances, would give but half its real strength to the British

empire; and often would be, in one sense, a burden instead of a stay."

These sentiments were penned at the close of 1802. A subsequent letter, written early in 1803, mentioned the necessity of Mr Wickham's going to Limerick, "where a spirit of licentiousness prevailed, which led the lower orders to adopt readily any scheme of mischief. They were, in fact, ripe for any disturbance; and as *banditti* their numbers were formidable, though as *rebels* they were nothing. The gentry were so divided into parties, and those parties were so hostile to each other, that *authority* was necessary to bring them even to act *cordially* together for the public safety; and this, it was hoped, Mr. Wickham's visit would effect." Still, however, amidst these lingering evils, the advantages of the Union were beginning to appear. This Mr. Addington intimated to the Speaker, on the 7th of January, when returning to him a letter which he had forwarded for perusal: —

"My dear Sir,

"Many thanks to you for the satisfaction afforded me by the enclosed.* In saying this, I do not mean to imply any opinion of the expediency of a general commutation of tithes in Ireland; but it is highly gratifying to me to see such a testimony of the nature and extent of the benefits already derived from the Union, and to observe the extreme importance attached by Lord Redesdale to a *resident Protestant clergy*; without which I am thoroughly convinced that improving agriculture, and growing manufactures and commerce, will be insufficient to produce substantial and solid prosperity. Ever, my dear Sir, &c. &c.

"Henry Addington."

Lord Redesdale had observed, in one of his letters,

* A Letter from Lord Redesdale.

that "the Union had put an end to the tyranny which the great families had been in the habit of exercising over the viceregal government;" and, doubtless, the hopeful tone of the above letter was occasioned by the increasing influence which the Prime Minister felt himself enabled to exercise in Irish affairs. The war, however, unfortunately interrupted his plans for the benefit of Ireland; and revived in that unhappy land the embers of rebellion, which time and coercion had smothered, but not extinguished. Many of the actors in the rebellion of 1798 had sought safety in France; and on the rupture with England the First Consul naturally availed himself of the opportunity to promote, through them, his favourite object of separating Ireland from the British dominion. One of these was Mr. Robert Emmett, whose elder brother had taken a leading part in the former rebellion. This person, returning to Ireland, united with a few others in organising a conspiracy, of which the daring nature of its object singularly contrasted with its slender means and contemptible numbers. Having provided a supply of fire-arms, ammunition, and pikes, they placed them in the hands of a mob, composed of the rabble of Dublin, and some peasantry drawn from the adjoining counties. On the evening of Saturday, the 23d of July, they sallied forth at the head of this motley crew, with the insane object of attacking the Castle and seat of government, defended by above 3000 regular troops. The conduct of this enterprise accorded with its original insanity. After remaining in the streets for a considerable time, without daring to attack the Castle, and cruelly murdering the venerable Chief Justice of Ireland, Lord Kilwarden, Colonel Browne of the 21st

regiment, and a few detached soldiers who unfortunately fell in their way, the conspirators were at length attacked, and utterly routed by two small detachments of troops, consisting of about fifty men each, commanded by subaltern officers, whose conduct on the occasion was deserving of the highest praise. This brief detail will be sufficient to explain the following extracts from letters addressed to Mr. Addington by Lord Redesdale at that period:—

"My dear Sir, Ely Place, Dublin, July 25th, 1803.

"The melancholy event of the death of Lord Kilwarden and his nephew, and the dreadful outrage which produced it, you will have heard in various ways. I was, at the time, in the country, and knew nothing of the matter till a detachment of yeomanry alarmed my house at four o'clock on Sunday morning.

"I immediately set off for Dublin; and I hope the strong measures pursued will suppress this beginning of rebellion. That it is a *beginning* only, I cannot doubt. * * * I believe all the actors have been puppets, worked by persons behind the scenes; and for this reason, if no other, you must immediately arm us by the suspension of 'Habeas Corpus.' * * * But you must do more. You must renew the martial law, or pass some other bill, to enable the military to act with greater promptitude, *if the Lord Lieutenant shall see fit.* We have done all we can venture to do; but armed rebellion must be met by arms. It is as important to destroy the influence of the terror of the rebels over the minds of those inclined to their cause, as to subdue them in the field. Free quarters are what I can never approve. Courts martial are dreadful things, and raise discontent in many minds; but people would rather live under a military government than under no government; and if they cannot be protected by government, they might as well live under no government. * * * Whilst the rebel directory is absolute and on the spot, the King's government is restricted and under the guidance of a distant power, necessarily ignorant of every

thing which can guide *instant* decision. This state of things gives wonderful force to those who are adverse to the Union; and I am sorry to say there are too many who are so. I hope for the best; but, as the event may deceive my hopes, I must be prepared for the worst. Believe me, my dear Sir, &c. &c.

"REDESDALE."

From the same to the same.

"Ely Place, July 27th, 1803.

"* * * We have had a most providential escape. I believe the horror attending the murder of my venerable friend (who preserved, to his last breath, that scrupulous regard for the due execution of justice which marked his life, and which induced him, in the agony of dissolution, to put out his hand to save the wretch who had murdered him,) had the effect of checking the progress of the rebellious troop, who were proceeding, at the moment, to the accomplishment of their great purpose—the seizure of the Castle. They hesitated: their leaders could not draw them on. As some stood motionless, others slunk back: pikes fell from the hands of many, and the troop dispersed almost of itself. The other parties, not finding their expected leaders from Thomas Street, after waiting a considerable time, began to shrink from their enterprise: their numbers dwindled, and at length all went off. Some of the country parties which were advancing, hearing of the failure, turned into the mountains. Had I been coming up to Dublin that evening, I must have fallen into their hands. They were, in great numbers, posted on a bridge over which I must have passed—not with any design as to myself, and, indeed, I believe that they had none particularly directed to Lord Kilwarden. Their object was, first, to seize the Castle, and the Lord Lieutenant and his family at the Park, and then to seize all other persons of considerable rank. I have been silent on this head to prevent any alarm to Lady Redesdale, who was sufficiently alarmed by what she saw, and by the call at four o'clock in the morning. You must arm us with every power; and I think, so armed, we shall be safe. Without the utmost exertion, I know not what may be the consequence. We stand

even now at the verge of extreme danger. * * * It was apprehended, after the last rebellion, that government had never gotten to the bottom of the plot; and, particularly, had never discovered who were the persons forming the directory or executive of the Irish union. It is now clear, from papers which have been taken, that the whole number of those persons was never discovered; and that they have ever since remained in this country, probably not objects even of suspicion, and yet actively employed in concert with the traitors at large in France since the peace. In fine, it is clear that the rebellion was smothered, but never extinguished; and that the same persons are now the promoters who were so in 1796. * * * I am shocked at the hypocrisy of pastoral letters. Can I believe that so many Catholics would have been engaged in the conspiracy just developed, which (a few leaders excepted, who have no religion) is completely Catholic, and that not one Catholic priest should have had the least suspicion of it? That the great majority of the clergy knew it, no one can have the least doubt. In other countries the confession affords a protection to government: here it only adds to its danger. * * * Ask if one man has been excommunicated, or even threatened with excommunication, for being a rebel. You can only trust to the Protestants of the country, especially those of the Established Church." * * *

Whilst the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was thus describing the anxiety of the Irish government, the British ministry and parliament were coming forward in their support with laudable promptitude and decision. On the 28th of July Mr. Addington presented a message from his Majesty, informing parliament of the painful intelligence from Dublin, and "calling upon it immediately to adopt measures for the protection and security of his subjects in that part of the kingdom." Contrary to the usual practice, and notwithstanding Mr. Windham attempted to interpose delay,

for which he was severely handled by Mr. Sheridan, Lord Hawkesbury, and Mr. Addington, the latter moved an address in reply to the message, and followed up that proposition by two others; one to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, the other to enable the Lord Lieutenant, when any persons should be taken in rebellion, to order them to be tried immediately by a court martial. Two bills to the above effect were received with such unanimity by the House of Commons, that they were carried through all their stages in that same evening. They were then sent up to the House of Lords, which had remained sitting, in expectation of their arrival, and were there passed also with equal promptitude. Meanwhile his Majesty had remained in town, for the purpose of giving his assent to the measures which the wisdom of his parliament might recommend; and such was the energy displayed throughout, that on the following day a messenger conveyed to the Irish government all the powers which it required at this crisis of its affairs. Mr. Addington used frequently in after-life to speak with complacency of this decisive act of his administration. The effect which it produced in Dublin was thus described to him by Lord Redesdale on the 31st of July: —

"I wrote to you yesterday, in extreme despondency, in consequence of a letter which the Lord Lieutenant had received from Lord Pelham, which sunk us all to the earth, in the apprehension that nothing would be done by his Majesty's ministers, at least without considerable delay. The intelligence, which arrived to-day, of the vigorous measures adopted, of the manner in which they had been opened in the House of Commons, and received by parliament, has revived us in proportion to our former depression. I think,

unless French force shall change the scene, we are now safe; that we can act with vigour; and then the people will feel full confidence in government. † * * *

"*August* 1*st.*—We have signed the proclamation notifying the Martial Law Bill; and also offered rewards of 50*l.* for each of the first hundred persons to be apprehended and convicted of the attack on Dublin on Saturday night, and for every of the first hundred persons convicted of leaving their homes, armed with pikes or guns, for the purpose of co-operation. This we have done with the view of breaking the secrecy of their proceedings. * * *

"*August* 11*th.*—The arrival of Wickham has been a great relief to us. He is getting us into the routine which he learned in the Duke of Portland's office; and all will soon be in a state of regularity unknown in the proceedings of the Irish government. You will soon have an alphabetical list of all the persons against whom informations have been laid; so that none of them may be unknown to government, whenever his or *her* (for we have lady conspirators) name occurs. We are, unquestionably, most defective in our military commander. Lord C. told me, long ago, that he was not calculated for troublesome times. The events of the 23d of July have occasioned much discontent; and neither the military nor civil officers manifest much confidence. They particularly blame his persisting in staying at Kilmainham on the 23d, which prevented the possibility of his acting in concert with the Castle. * * * I think it now clear, that the present is a remnant of the old rebellion; and that the active instruments, almost universally, have been *pardoned rebels.* * * * I most heartily rejoice that the correspondence with England is put into the hands of one from whom diligence, attention, and regularity may be expected, and with whom the correspondence may be really confidential. It was disheartening in the extreme to deal with the old office. * * *

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† In addition to the legislative measures here alluded to, two of the best regiments in the service, the 9th and 25th foot, were immediately sent to Ireland.—*Mr. Addington's letter to Mr Yorke,* August 26th.

"*August* 19*th*.—The assiduity with which it is asserted that this government was surprised on the 23d renders a direct contradiction of the falsehood absolutely necessary. Government was in no degree surprised. Previous to the 23d, information of the plans of the disaffected had been obtained; and, on the morning of that day, Mr. Marsden, the under secretary, whom I never yet knew alarmed without ground, thought it advisable to desire the presence of the Lord Lieutenant at the Castle. His Excellency came, with General Fox, between three and four o'clock; and Mr. Marsden detailed the grounds of his apprehensions. These were certainly treated with some slightness by the General, who, unfortunately, had had no experience on such subjects. * * * But, although he was somewhat incredulous, he did not venture to deny the danger; and he left Marsden, between three and four, with the full persuasion that he (the General) would give all necessary orders. About six o'clock Sir Charles Asgill, the second in command, came to the Castle in consequence of a message from Mr. Marsden; and, declining an engagement to dine with Sir E. Littlehales, took a mere refreshment at the office, and then went with General Donne, Colonel Vassall, and Colonel Cotton to Kilmainham, in pursuance of a message from the General. This proved a journey of great danger, as the insurgents were then rising in force in the very streets through which they were to pass; and they were saved by the knowledge one of them had obtained of a by-way. Why no patroles had been sent out, or why no step at all was taken, except sending for these gentlemen, I cannot tell. By sending for them, he took from the Castle the general of the district, the commander of the barracks, &c. &c.; and had they been cut off the utmost confusion must have ensued.

"These officers received no orders at Kilmainham, except to go back to the barracks, and wait there for the General. They went to the barracks, but the General did not come. Before eleven, Mr. Marsden had sent three several messages to the barracks for military assistance in support of the guard at the Castle; but he received no such assistance, the officers waiting for the General. At length they sent to the Castle

an additional force; but all was then over. The troops in the barracks in James's Street, and the guard at the Counter, consisting, I believe, of two companies only, had completely beaten the rebels. Indeed, I doubt whether 500 rebels were ever in arms."

Many of the rebels were apprehended; and true bills having been found against Emmett and nineteen others, they were tried, in the month of September, by a special commission, according to the usual forms of law. One only was acquitted: nineteen were found guilty, of whom one was recommended to mercy; the remainder were executed without delay. Russell, who had formerly been a captain in the King's land service, and a few others, were subsequently tried and executed in the counties. So ended that rash and criminal enterprise.

Mr. Addington's sentiments respecting it will be exhibited in a few brief extracts from two of the letters which he addressed to the Earl of Hardwicke, dated August the 23d: —

"Since I wrote to Wickham, the difficulties in the way of Lord Cornwallis's appointment to the command of the army in Ireland have been materially increased. The field for selection is extremely limited; but the opinion of the few persons with whom I can converse on such a subject preponderates in favour of Lord Cathcart. It seems, however, to be well worthy your consideration, whether the authority of government and public confidence will be restored by an arrangement that is merely a military one. The impression is general, that intelligence respecting the dispositions and designs of the disaffected was constantly received, by some persons in subordinate

official situations, with coldness and distrust, and that these feelings and sentiments manifestly influenced their conduct. I have, therefore, a serious doubt, whether it will be possible for your Excellency to maintain that degree of influence which is due to your station and character, and which is essential to the interests of the public at this conjuncture, without some new arrangements in the departments to which I refer. It cannot be necessary to say that I speak without prejudice. * * * You may be assured of all the additional military strength that can possibly be spared from hence. With the force that, I trust, will be actually in Ireland in the course of a few weeks, with an intelligent and active commander-in-chief, and with discreet and efficient men in the departments to which I have alluded, I feel a persuasion and confidence that rebellion will be kept down, and invasion prevented or constantly repelled.

"*August 25th.*—* * * It may be considered as settled, that your present commander-in-chief is to have a command in the Mediterranean, for which he is better calculated than for his present situation, being, certainly, an excellent officer and a most valuable man; and that Lord Cathcart is to succeed him in Ireland."

CHAPTER XXI.

1803.

Prorogation of Parliament. Letters from Sir Edward Pellew, Earl of Caithness, General Dumourier, Mr. Charles Grant, Sir Richard Hill, and Mr. Le Fevre. Capture of the French West India Islands. Mr. Charles Yorke succeeds Lord Pelham in the Home Department. Mr. Addington's Military Preparations. Letter from Mr. Sheridan respecting Lord Hobart's Circular. Letters from Mr. Addington to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Yorke. Meeting of Parliament — Debate on the King's Speech. Mr. Windham's Apprehensions of the Enemy landing in Norfolk. Expectation of immediate Invasion. Extracts from Mr. Abbot's Diary. Measures to be pursued in case of the Enemy landing. Letters from Lords Nelson, Wellesley, and Redesdale. Mr. Addington appoints Sir James Mackintosh to the Recordership of Bombay. Writes to Lord Redesdale and Mr. Wickham.

The prompt and spirited measures respecting Ireland already described constituted the last parliamentary acts of the present session, which was closed by a speech from the throne on the 12th of August. In tracing the proceedings of the legislature, the author has outstripped the course of the private correspondence, to which, therefore, he now returns. The following letter has been selected for insertion from a feeling of filial reverence, it being the earliest preserved specimen of a series of communications between the writer and Mr. Addington which extended through thirty years: —

From Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Pellew, Bart., M.P., to the Right Hon. Henry Addington.

"Dear Sir, July 2d.

"Your very kind letter reached me this day; and I went to the House in full hopes of being able to say, personally, how greatly I feel obliged to you for all the marks of your kindness and attention. They will ever live in my remembrance; and I shall always feel most happy when I can evince a due sense of my obligations to you. Believe me, my dear Sir, with the highest respect and esteem, &c. &c.

"EDWD. PELLEW."

At this period Mr. Addington received two communications from Scotland, which show the exertions he was making to promote the improvement of the Highlands, when the war interrupted his benevolent and patriotic designs. Indeed, he was always an ardent admirer of the Highland character, and, if truth must be told, by no means a severe censurer of what he called "their noble treason of the 45." The former of the letters alluded to was written by the Earl of Caithness, and conveyed to Mr. Addington the "best acknowledgments of a meeting of the gentlemen of the county of Caithness, convened at Thurso, over which his Lordship presided, for having laid the foundation of such extensive improvements in the Highlands as could not fail to do great credit to his administration, and to be of infinite public advantage." There is a second document to the same effect from Mr. Charles Grant, M.P. for Aberdeen, conveying the thanks of his constituents, voted unanimously at a general meeting, for the great attention which Mr. Addington had paid also to their quarter of the Highlands.

From contemplating these gratifying results of

peace, it is painful to recall the attention to preparations for war. But the threat of invasion had now roused, in every bosom, a determined spirit of resistance; and the various British counties presented doubtless many counterparts of the loyal and festive scene alluded to in the following letter from Sir Richard Hill to Mr. Addington: —

"Dear and honoured Sir, Hawkstone, July 30th.

"This day I received the enclosed letter from Colonel Hill*, who is yet at Belfast. I shall not comment upon it; but it shows too plainly what the spirit of the country is. * * * You will recollect that I expressed to you, when in town, my fears concerning *internal enemies*, especially in Ireland. May He who says to the proud waves, 'Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther,' in mercy put an immediate stop to these appearances!

"My nephews, Major and Captain Hill, are just setting out for Shrewsbury to meet Prince William of Gloucester, who reviews the Shrewsbury cavalry this day. On Monday next his Royal Highness will review my eldest nephew's two troops in my park at Hawkstone, where they will be joined by two neighbouring troops who have put themselves under his command. I shall feel much pleasure in regaling all the troops on the spot, after the review, with the roast beef of Old England and Hawkstone ale. His Royal Highness and all the officers will, I expect, honour me with their company, at Hawkstone, to dinner; when I will take care that no honours and respect shall be wanting which it is in the power of a loyal heart to bestow. You will be pleased in thinking that we shall make well for the new malt duty among the soldiers; though I shall give the strictest orders to prevent excess. In my opinion, there is an end of hospitality when inebriety takes place. I do indeed think very much about you in your present most arduous situation. May you long be

* Afterwards General Lord Hill.

preserved as a blessing to this country, and to the best of kings, and the best of constitutions.

"I am, &c. &c. RICH^D. HILL.

As the Minister's preparations for the war were subsequently called in question, the following additional testimony to their sufficiency cannot, with propriety, be omitted: —

"Dear Sir, Heckfield Place, Aug. 7th.

"It is most gratifying to me to concur in the applause which has been so deservedly bestowed on the more recent measures of your administration. If your various plans of defence had been brought forward more precipitately, I am confident they could not have been executed. As it is, all is in right time. This is an important era of your political existence. 'Tis yours now to 'ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm:' I hope you will live to calm it. The spirit of volunteering is up among us. The yeomanry are turning out in every quarter: in general they are capitally mounted. The strength of the Woodley corps is doubled. Their ardour is doubled also: they are out at least three times a week. Other corps follow the example: we are all upon the alert. * * *

"I remain, dear Sir, your truly attached

"C. S. LE FEVRE."

At this period the Minister took advantage of the recess to effect a slight exchange of office amongst the members of the cabinet. On the 17th of August the Right Hon. Charles Yorke was sworn in as Secretary of State for the Home Department, *vice* Lord Pelham, who shortly afterwards was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, on the resignation of that office by the Earl of Liverpool.*

* Since "the Diary of Lord Malmesbury" often represents Lord Pelham, towards whom Mr. Addington always entertained very

Early in the month of August, a decisive proof of the energy and promptitude of the government was manifested in the arrival of intelligence of the capture of the two recently restored islands of St. Lucia and Tobago. This success had been obtained at a small sacrifice, in consequence of government having anticipated any attempt of the enemy to reinforce those islands, by despatching orders to attack them on the very day upon which the war was declared. The reduction of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo fol-

friendly feelings, as the object of that minister's disfavour and unkindness, the author is compelled to bring forward his Lordship's name more frequently than would otherwise be necessary. Thus, as the Diary states (vol. iv. p. 284.), that on the occasion here alluded to "*Mr. Addington dismissed or turned his Lordship out,*" it is incumbent to declare, in justice to both parties, that this is an incorrect representation of the matter. On the 25th of August, his Majesty informed Mr. Addington that "it was certain, from what the Duke of Portland had gathered from Lord Pelham, that his Lordship would decline being of the cabinet." This fully exonerates Mr. Addington from the charge in question; but there are also copies of two letters which Mr. Addington addressed to Lord Pelham on the 2d and 27th of October; in the former of which he stated, "in obedience to the King's command, that his Majesty, after perusing Lord Pelham's letter, was still of opinion that the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster ought not to be granted for life, but that it was his Majesty's intention, when a proper opportunity offered, to mark his sense of Lord Pelham's services, by bestowing on him an office to which a similar objection would not apply." In the letter of the 27th of October, Mr. Addington informed Lord Pelham that the King would deliver to him the seals of the Duchy of Lancaster at the levee on the 9th of November. He then reminded him that "the words (usual contingencies, it is believed) in his," Mr. Addington's, "former letter, to which Lord Pelham had adverted, were suggested by his Lordship himself, and were introduced into that letter with his previous concurrence;" adding, "It was my intention to frame the letter so as to adapt it accurately and precisely to what was understood between us when I had the honour of seeing you at Richmond Park."

lowed shortly afterwards; and the services of the British squadron in the West Indies were then employed in contributing to the destruction of the French army in St. Domingo, the conquerors of Hohenlinden, who were gradually melting away before the fatal ravages of the enemy, climate, famine, and disease. Shut up on the land side in their forts and fortifications by the exasperated blacks, and blockaded from the sea by the English, General Rochambeau and his scattered detachments successively surrendered during the autumn to the British commanders, to whose protection alone they were indebted for their lives, and by whom they were transferred, under capitulation, to England.

We find Mr. Addington's views and occupations at this period described in the following letter to his brother, dated

"Richmond Park, Aug. 19th, 1803.

"You might well wonder at the delay of my writing to you, for I can hardly credit it myself; but my mind and time have never been less at liberty than since we parted. I cannot help flattering myself, that the latter few weeks of the session went off as satisfactorily as any part of it.

"I rejoice to hear of the success of your military plans.* The corps in London and Westminster are indefatigable, seldom giving less than four hours a day to the drill. The whole force that will be wanted in the first instance will be raised, throughout the kingdom, by means of voluntary offers, which are so numerous, that many of them must, for the present, be declined, or the country would be broken down by its patriotism. Ireland is the vulnerable quarter. I wish you could be of our party to-morrow, when Lord Hawkes-

* Mr. Hiley Addington was then raising, in Somersetshire, a corps of 1000 volunteers, called "The Mendip Legion."

bury, Sheridan, Bragge, &c. &c. are to dine here. Yorke received the seals on Wednesday, and will attend the cabinet to-day for the first time.

"Yours ever affectionately, H. A."

The Minister's whole mind and attention appear now to have been absorbed by the duty of preparing the means of military resistance to the threatened invasion. Both the spirit and apprehensions of the nation were fully excited. Tens of thousands pressed forward with the offer of their voluntary services; and hundreds of suggestions, comprising every degree both of merit and absurdity, were submitted to the consideration of government. At the same time, numbers now first experienced those sensations of anxiety which intelligence of an enemy at the gate must necessarily occasion; and these lent a willing ear to the complaints of opposition, who, in their accustomed manner, denounced all the Minister's preparations as inadequate, and every plan which he adopted as unwise. Under these circumstances, a more difficult line of duty than that which Mr. Addington had to pursue can scarcely be imagined. Regarded with distrust by three political parties, he had so to conduct his preparations as to satisfy parliament, to calm the apprehensions of the timid, and find occupation for the bold in the manner best calculated to encourage their energies. It was impossible that he should succeed in all these particulars; and such being the case, it is now the author's duty to show, from the documents before him, that Mr. Addington's failure in retaining the confidence of the legislature resulted, not from the absence on his part of diligence, ability, or a disposition to receive

advice, but solely from the inevitable difficulties of his position. On the 25th of August, we find him arranging with the Duke of York a large augmentation of the regular cavalry, by adding a squadron to every regiment in the service. Cavalry, and the light irregular infantry of the volunteer force, presented (as was justly stated by Colonel, afterwards Sir Thomas Picton, in a paper which he addressed to Mr. Addington,) the best means of harassing an enemy on landing; consequently, particular attention was paid to these two branches of the service. As regarded the latter force, it was found impossible to provide arms or accoutrements for the prodigious number who offered their services; and as the balloting for the militia suffered from the same cause, it became necessary to limit, if possible, the amount of volunteers. Lord Hobart, therefore, addressed a circular letter to that effect to several lords lieutenant, which gave much offence in various quarters, as tending to damp the ardour of patriotism. It created also much dissatisfaction amongst the volunteers themselves; those corps whose services were accepted murmuring at the military duties thus imposed upon them, and the remainder, whose offers were rejected, being discontented at the slight which they supposed was thus cast upon them. The step appears to have been unavoidable; nevertheless, it brought down upon Mr. Addington a flood of letters, one of which shall here be inserted, in grateful acknowledgment of the zeal and patriotism of its distinguished writer: —

"Dear Sir, Woburn, Aug. 29th.

"When I first saw Lord Hobart's letter to the several lords lieutenant, directing them not even to transmit to

government offers of volunteer service to a greater amount than the number which, together with all actually existing corps of yeomanry and volunteers, would be equal to six times the old militia, I felt great apprehension that the most unpleasant consequences would follow; and that a risk was incurred, not merely of damping the spirit so generally rising and spreading, but of creating a temper of discontent among the greater part of the mass of the people. Nothing but finding, to my conviction at least, that the effect has already justified my fears, could induce me to intrude on you any opinion of mine upon a subject which so entirely belongs to the direction of his Majesty's ministers.* But we must not overlook the language which, as members of parliament, we have all in common held on this point. One pledge was, to become, as far as possible, an armed nation; and the appeal, both in the House and out of it, has been to the spirit and loyalty of every man in the country capable of bearing arms in its defence. The phrase which, I remember, you referred to at your table—of 'one and all'—is become a powerful catchword since Lord Hobart's letter. In every village they are ready to go forth 'one and all;' but the mere mention of limitations has abated the general zeal. I wish I may be misinformed in this respect; but Lord Ossory and the Duke of Bedford think more of the matter even than I do. It would indeed be unreasonable to expect that all the arms asked for could be now forthcoming; but, as to the clothing, nothing would be easier than to have county subscriptions for that object. At all events, dear Sir, excuse this intrusion on my part. * * * I shall be in town in a few

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* It appears by the following extract from a letter which Mr. Addington addressed to General Simcoe on the 4th of September, that measures were immediately taken to remedy the evil of which Mr. Sheridan complained:—"For particulars I beg to refer you to Mr. Yorke's recent communications to the lords lieutenant. It will be a great satisfaction to me to hear that they have removed the uneasiness which prevailed, and that the insurrection of loyalty is quieted, and good-humour and zeal completely restored."

days, and shall very earnestly wish a short conversation with you on this subject. I have the honour to be, with great esteem and respect,

"Yours, &c. &c. R. B. SHERIDAN."

Writing to his brother on the 30th of August, Mr. Addington observed, "I have a long but very kind letter from Sheridan upon the same subject by this day's post;" and it appears from a subsequent passage that, notwithstanding this temporary ground of unpopularity, the means of security were rapidly increasing. "To this," Mr. Addington proceeds, "no measure appears to have contributed more effectually than that of the army of reserve, of which 25,000 men are already raised and reported in Great Britain. The number of volunteers accepted, and entitled to allowances and exemptions from other services, exceeds 300,000. It is intended to appoint field officers from the regulars to inspect the volunteer corps, and report once a month. This will insure attention to training and discipline." Writing to Marquis Wellesley on the 9th of September, Mr. Addington observed further on this point: — "It is impossible to convey to you an adequate idea of the spirit which universally animates the country. The number of regulars, militia, and army of reserve in Great Britain will amount by the end of this month (when the latter will be completed) to 140,000 men; and of volunteers, whose services have been accepted, to upwards of 300,000, and they might be increased to any amount."

"All hands are aloft," he informed his brother on the 12th of October, "and with increased activity.

Ireland and the North are the quarters to which I look with the greatest anxiety; but in each we are strengthening every day." The activity here described remained unabated throughout the autumn. It extended to the minutest particulars of every branch, both of the military and naval service. Thus on the 13th of October we find Mr. Addington suggesting to his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief the policy of his Majesty's reviewing the volunteer corps of London and Westminster—a proposition which was shortly afterwards carried out, to the delight of every loyal bosom. On the 17th of the same month, the Duke of York concerted with Mr. Addington the means of paying the forces in specie in case of actual invasion, as it was apprehended that, under such circumstances, paper currency would undergo a temporary depreciation. The Minister displayed equal forethought respecting the supply of the metropolis, and the grand army, with the means of subsistence in the presence of an enemy. On this subject he required the sentiments of the Commissary-General, Sir Brook Watson; who replied, on the 10th of November, that the government had, deposited at Brentford, Fulham, &c. &c., sufficient flour to supply the whole capital for a fortnight; whilst the stock in hand, and at the mills, was, at least, adequate to a consumption of three weeks more: there was, therefore, nothing to apprehend on that head. At this period, indeed, Mr. Addington's active mind appeared to embrace every department of the preparations. There is a letter which he addressed to Mr. Yorke on the 28th of October, in which he described what he considered "the best means of calling forth a large

supplementary force, a part of which might take the field under certain circumstances; and the remainder continue at home to protect persons and property. This," he added, "would materially increase the confidence of the volunteers when brought into actual service. This force should consist of persons of the second, third, and fourth classes; each individual to be armed with a pike and pistol: the exercise not to be more frequent than once or twice a week, and that for a short time only; and no expense to be incurred, in the first instance, for uniforms or accoutrements. These corps to consist of volunteers, and be limited to large towns and their neighbourhood." The volunteer system was evidently a favourite one, and occupied much of his attention. "It is probable," he informed his brother at this period, "that a great part of the town duty will soon be performed by volunteers, which will leave near two additional battalions of Guards for the eastern and southern districts. The men raised for the army of reserve are in general in great forwardness. The 47th, in which there are not more than 150 old soldiers, and the rest reserve-men, is represented as fit to take the field; and the appearance of the volunteers in and about London is spoken of in the highest terms. Lord Cathcart, I conclude, reached Dublin on Friday. There could not, I am fully convinced, have been a better appointment. I find the opinion of most military men to be, that about one third of every volunteer corps of infantry should be armed with pikes, and that all should be trained to use that weapon, as well as the firelock."

In his consultations, however, with military men, Mr. Addington did not confine himself to those of his

own country. By the following extract from a letter which General Dumourier addressed to him on the 11th of October, it appears that the former had been invited to England by the British government to render his assistance at this conjuncture: —

" Monsieur,

" Recevez tous mes remerciments sur la pension de 600*l.* que vous m'avez fait accorder par le meilleur des rois.*

" Ayant rempli dans ce pays ci l'espèce de service pour laquelle j'ai été appellé par le Duc de York et par le gouvernement, je suis à présent obligé de repasser sur le Continent; et j'espère que ce sera avec votre approbation, je compte reprendre mon séjour en Dannemark, ou dans la Pomeraine Suédoise, pour être à portée de renouer mes corréspondances politiques, qui peuvent devenir très-utiles au Roi et au gouvernement.

" J'aurai soin d'en entretenir une très suivie avec Lord Hawkesbury, ou telle autre personne que vous voudrez me désigner, et je m'occuperai tout entier de ce qui pourra être utile à votre patrie, devenue la mienne par la pension qu'elle m'accorde. Dans tous les cas le Roi pourra disposer de ma tête et de mon épée. * * *

" Comptez pour tout le temps de ma vie sur l'attachement

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* A few days before, Mr. Addington had enjoyed the gratification of affording assistance to another distinguished emigrant, the Archbishop of Narbonne, whose touching appeal exhibits in a striking manner the instability of fortune. " Je supplie Monsieur Addington, par tout ce qu'il y a de plus sacré, de tendre une main secourable à un vieillard de quatre-vingt-trois ans, qui après avoir rempli une carrèire honorable, éprouve des malheurs qu'il n'a pas mérité.

" Dillon,
" Archevêque et Primat de Narbonne,
" Commandeur de l'ordre du St. Esprit."

At the foot of this note Mr. Addington has written the words, " He was relieved and gratified."

respectueux avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être, de votre Excellence, le très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

" LE G^L. DUMOURIER.

" Clarges Street, No. 34., le 11 8^bre, 1803.

" A Mons.—Mons. Addington."

Whilst the British Minister was thus providing for every contingency,

" The enemy," as he informed his brother on the 10th of November, " were pushing on their preparations with the utmost activity; but," he added, " they are far from completed. It does not, however, follow, that they may not make the attack with the force which they now have in their ports and on their coasts, which is certainly very considerable. We are not likely, I think, to experience much opposition in parliament before Christmas; and the sitting will probably be over by the 20th of December. Sheridan is to dine and sleep here to-morrow. Lords Hawkesbury and Castlereagh will meet him. The former kissed hands, yesterday, on his peerage. The Lord Mayor's dinner went off uncommonly well.

" You will have heard, before this reaches you, of the surrender of Demerara and Essequibo—events of peculiar importance at this moment, which is one of difficulty to our West India merchants, as there is a large accumulation of British property in those settlements.

" I have finished the sketch of the Speech, which, I anxiously hope, will not be disapproved of. The motion for an address, in the House of Commons, will be made by Ashley and seconded by Burland.

" I have not heard whether any thing is to be done, on the 22d, by any adverse party. Windham will, of course, return to the charge. Pitt and Fox will certainly attend. I feel very little anxiety at the approach of the meeting, as there is no part of our conduct upon which I should not rather seek than shun discussion.

" Your ever affectionate H. A."

The speech alluded to above, which his Majesty de-

livered in person on the 22d, was the last which Mr. Addington was destined to prepare as Prime Minister of the country. It was much, and, in the opinion of Bishop Huntingford, who wrote a description of it to his young friend Mr. Henry Addington, at Christchurch, deservedly approved. Addresses in accordance with it were passed in both Houses without opposition. In the Commons, as stated in Mr. Abbot's diary, "Mr. Fox signified his readiness and concurrence, explaining himself only on two points—first, that he expected some notice to have been taken of the Russian mediation; and, secondly, that he warned the House against considering that the present system of governing Ireland was to be considered as a proper and lasting policy." He was answered by Mr. Addington, who said that "the Russian mediation had not produced any successful issue; and that if ever the Irish question was discussed (which it ought not now to be), he should be ready to state his own sentiments, and hear those of others." On the day after the debate, Mr. Addington received the following complimentary notice of his speech from the Duke of Queensberry:—

"This letter is only to say how much I was pleased with your answer to Charles Fox, and how very much I admire it. I maintain to all those who I think have any sense, that no person in either House could have made a better answer, or, perhaps, so good a one. I approve particularly of what you say about Ireland; and I find every body of that opinion. I am your very sincere friend,

"QUEENSBERRY."

When the report of the address was presented to the House of Commons on the 23d, Mr. Windham

took occasion to censure the government in no measured terms for the inadequacy of their preparations. He entertained the notion, this chapter shows how erroneously, that they had sought no advice, adopted no precautions; and that the enemy, had he succeeded in landing, instead of being met, as he would have been, by 140,000 regular troops and 300,000 armed and disciplined volunteers, would have found us wholly unprepared. He was also impressed with an apprehension, which in after years Lord Sidmouth used often to speak of as unworthy so great and intelligent a mind, that the enemy would land in Norfolk at or near Cromer, as if the sands, tides, and shallows of that dangerous coast, the distance from London, and the intervening fens of Ely, did not constitute sufficient barriers against such a rash attempt. He complained, however, on this occasion, that adequate measures had not been taken for the security of his native county, and plainly threatened an impeachment of ministers "should any great stroke be struck in Norfolk, for want of those precautions which had been pointed out to the honourable gentlemen." * No reply was offered by the ministers to

* One of these was adopted by the succeeding government, and, as many can still remember, excited much merriment, from its obvious inutility. It consisted of a row of pointed wooden stakes placed along the coast, as near as possible to the sea. This, though very convenient as an article of fuel to the beachmen, was utterly valueless as a defence against an enemy, since every gale washed it away. It is curious to observe the errors of judgment into which the strongest minds occasionally fall. A singular instance of this was afforded by Bishop Watson, who, at this crisis, when two hundred thousand veteran troops lined the coasts of France ready to embark for England at a moment's notice, and the whole male

this speech. Indeed, it would have been most unwise to attach any importance to sentiments which would have proved dangerous in proportion to their incorrectness, by encouraging the enemy to action. That they gave much offence to sober-minded people is shown by the following remarks which Sir Richard Hill addressed to Mr. Addington on the 3d of December: —

"Nothing has struck me more forcibly than your patience upon W.'s most provoking speech on the report of the address. Your silence, however, was dignified; and, whilst it did you the highest honour, was doubtless more galling than any thing which could have been said. I confess that the whole of that night's business put me strongly in mind of Rabshakeh's speech, to which the command of good king Hezekiah to his ministers was — 'Answer him not a word.'"

Sir Richard then alludes to Mr. Fox's animadversions regarding Ireland, and observes: —

"The statement concerning that country in his Majesty's speech, and your modest vindication of it, I was glad to see. It exactly agrees with the accounts I frequently receive from my nephew, Brigadier General Rowland Hill, whose last letter I take the liberty of enclosing. He has been stationed at Belfast, Athlone, and Galway; and in each of them has made such judicious arrangements, and conducted himself with so much caution and sweetness of temper, as have gained him high esteem and confidence among all sorts of people; and I verily believe it was owing to an anonymous letter he got at Belfast that an insurrection was prevented the very night before it was to have taken place."

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population of this country was arming to resist them, wrote a long letter to Mr. Addington, urging the immediate repeal of the Test Act, and the payment of the Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland, as the best means of resisting the threatened invasion.

Mr. Windham renewed the attack on the 9th of December, when the army estimates were brought forward by the new Secretary at War, Mr. Bragge. Amongst the various topics of inculpation introduced into his speech, he particularly animadverted on the impolicy of keeping on foot so large a force of volunteers, and described them as contributing to diminish the numbers of the regulars, without being equal to supply their places. On this point, however, he was altogether refuted by Mr. Pitt, who spoke most ably and temperately in this debate, and whose superior judgment or information enabled him fully to appreciate the utility of volunteers as light troops, in harassing an invading army, and to regard them as "probably the happiest expedient which could have been employed." * Mr. Windham's speech was not

* These words have been extracted from the paper already alluded to, which the heroic Picton addressed to Mr. Addington on the best means of resisting the threatened invasion. This document, dated November 16th, 1803, is so able and judicious, that, although it is to be found at length in "Robinson's Life of Picton," the following abstract of its contents will not, it is hoped, be deemed superfluous: —

After enlarging on the importance of the country publicly presenting an aspect of formidable preparation against an invading enemy, the paper proceeds to represent "the volunteers as the overflowing of the national spirit, and probably the happiest expedient which could have been employed to meet the immediate exigency of the times." The writer then makes some observations on "the situation of a hostile army landing in this country. It must unavoidably arrive relatively deficient in two of the most important departments of an army — cannon and cavalry; and its first object must be to force on a general action, in order to remedy the want of these two instruments so essential in a protracted war. But what is advantageous to the enemy must be injurious to us; and hence it would be politic to avail ourselves of the numerous advantages we should have in a prolonged contest, by fighting only

concluded by any motion; but it gave rise to a long and interesting debate, in the course of which all the objections contained in it were replied to by Mr. Addington, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Yorke, who gave the following statement of the military and naval preparations of Great Britain and Ireland: —

Regular troops in permanent pay, including militia, in Great Britain - - -	130,000
In Ireland - - - -	50,000
Sea Fencibles - - - -	25,000
Volunteers accepted and arrayed, in Great Britain, of whom 220,000 armed with muskets, 120,000 not yet so armed - -	340,000
In Ireland, all armed - - -	70,000
Total - - -	615,000

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on our own terms, and not hazarding every thing on the throw of a single die. As we must greatly outnumber the enemy in light troops of all kinds and cannon, the moment he puts himself in motion he should be attacked by our skirmishers, who, under protection of the cavalry, may safely approach and harass him on all sides. If he tries to dislodge them, being much lighter in their movements, they may easily avoid his detachments, which cannot disperse in pursuit for fear of our cavalry. Our regular force should dispute advantageous posts, but never risk a general affair. The principal efforts should be made by our light troops on the enemy's rear and flanks. Thus his progress will be arrested; and whilst *he* gradually loses confidence, *we* shall acquire it, and so eventually be prepared for the day of assured success. For this kind of war there cannot be too many light troops; and to prepare an active man for it requires only a limited amount of instruction and experience. My plan," Colonel Picton adds, "is to instruct every man between fifteen and fifty in the use of arms, dividing them into five or more classes, according to their ages and families, to be called out by degrees." The Colonel then proceeds to describe their proper dress, arms, and accoutrements, and recom-

Naval Force:

Number of ships of war employed - - -	469
Armed flotilla, of all sizes - - -	800

Besides twenty armed ships furnished by the East India Company, and ten frigates by the corporation of the Trinity House, for the protection of the Thames. In short, as Mr. Addington observed, "Of the male population of the empire, from eighteen to sixty, one fourth was then actually under arms."

This debate, and another on the same subject which occurred three days afterwards, when the army estimates were reported, were the only occasions on which Mr. Pitt took an active part during this brief session. So entirely indeed was the country absorbed by its preparations, that few questions of interest were submitted to the House, except what related to that subject, or to the enactment of coercive measures for the security of Ireland. On the 20th of December, parliament separated for the Christmas recess, leaving the government more at leisure to prepare for the crisis which then was believed to be rapidly approaching. A tremendous gale on Christmas day drove the various British blockading squadrons off their stations; and the intelligence received of the enemy's movements caused it to be fully expected that he would avail himself of the opportunity to make the attempt, at least against Ireland.

mends that when called out they should be formed into corps of 500, to be commanded by a Major from the line, with an intelligent subaltern or adjutant. By such a system, permanently established, the Colonel thought that the whole effective population of the country might be made available to its defence.

"It appears," Mr. Addington observed to his brother on the 28th of December, "to be the intention of the French government not to wait until their armaments are completed, lest their intended operations from the Dutch coast should be frustrated by the frost. The accounts which have hitherto arrived, of the effects of the gale on Sunday, are less serious than was apprehended. Lord Cornwallis came to town on Monday, and dines here to-day. You may depend upon hearing from time to time; and I beg you to believe nothing but what reaches you from good authority. * * * I hope to send you some satisfactory intelligence before the new year is out of her cradle.

"*December 29th.* Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh dined here yesterday, and we had a long and very satisfactory conversation. I am better satisfied with Lord Cornwallis's opinions respecting the volunteers, than with those of any other person.

"*December 31st.* All the Channel fleet are accounted for; and not one ship has received so much damage as to prevent its immediate return to the station off Brest. The weather and the present state of things have induced me to give up all thoughts of Richmond Park."

The following extract from Mr. Abbot's diary for Sunday, December 25th, explains the cause of the anxiety manifested in the foregoing letters. It describes also more fully than the author finds elsewhere the state of the naval preparations at that period, and appears therefore to form a suitable conclusion for this portion of the subject: —

"*December 25th.* Saw Mr. Addington at three o'clock this afternoon, and again, at night, between ten and eleven. We had two long and interesting conversations. The substance was as follows: — *From France.* News, dated Paris, Sunday 18th, was received in London Thursday last, the 22d, that the French troops were all in motion; that Bonaparte was on the point of leaving Paris; that the army of reserve was marching to the coast; that the military *préfet*

of Paris was marching, with 15,000 men, for Brest; that the French were slaughtering oxen at Bourdeaux for the immediate victualling of their fleet; that five sail of the line and several transports were ready to sail from the Texel, and fifteen sail, with 150 transports, from Brest; that Christmas day was the time appointed for sailing; and that the army at Boulogne were expected to wait till the Irish expedition had landed, before they made their attempt to cross the Channel.

"Our naval preparations stood thus: — Thornborough with five sail of the line and frigates off the Texel; Sir Sidney Smith and frigates watching Flushing; Lord Keith and six sail of the line in the Downs, besides six block-ships lying at the Nore; a cruising squadron of frigates and lesser vessels in the Straits; five sail of the line at St. Helens; Sir James Saumarez cruising with frigates off La Hogue; Admiral Cornwallis with fifteen sail of the line off Brest; a ship of the line and a frigate off L'Orient; Sir Edward Pellew with five sail of the line off Ferrol, besides a frigate watching Bourdeaux; Sir Richard Strachan with a ship of the line off Cadiz; Lord Gardner with five sail on the coast of Ireland; Admiral Cornwallis's rendezvous off the Lizard, in case of his fleet being blown off Brest, so as to go for Ireland, or follow the French up Channel, if they got out in either direction. Should the French run for the Downs, the five sail at Spithead would also follow them; and Lord Keith would, in addition to his six, and six block-ships, have the North Sea fleet also at his command.

"*Army.* Lord Cornwallis had been sent for to take the command of the central army, being the real reserve of volunteers and all the produceable force of the kingdom, in case the French made any impression on the coast.

"The King's plan is to move to Chelmsford if the landing was in Essex, or to Dartford if in Kent, taking with him Mr. Addington and Mr. Yorke, of the cabinet. The Queen and royal family to remove to the palace at Worcester*; the Bank books to be moved to the Tower, and the treasure to

* This statement is confirmed by the copy of a letter which Mr. Addington addressed to Sir Brook Watson on the 27th March, 1804, directing him "to cause such a quantity of meal and oats to

the cathedral of Worcester in waggons, under Sir Brook Watson's management; the merchants to shut up the Stock Exchange; the artillery and stores from Woolwich to be transported inland by the Grand Junction Canal; the press to be prohibited from publishing any account of the King's troops, or of the enemy, but by authority from the Secretary of State, to be communicated officially twice a day to all news-writers who may apply for it, else their press seized; the privy council, to be sitting in London, to issue all acts of government."

From this detail of arrangements, which, providentially, were never required, attention must now be directed to other subjects. It was at the close of this year that Mr. Addington enjoyed the satisfaction of conferring a benefit on one, of whom, though usually opposed to him in politics, he always spoke with much respect, by the appointment of Mr., afterwards Sir James, Mackintosh, to the recordership of Bombay. Mr. Addington had previously made two attempts to present Mr. Mackintosh to some legal appointment in India, the particulars of which have been reserved for notice at this part of the narrative. The first was at the end of 1801, when he selected that learned gentleman to occupy a professorship in the great collegiate institution which Marquis Wellesley was at that time contemplating in India. The plan was then relinquished in consequence of the expense likely to attend it; but the good-will manifested by *one* of the parties excited the lively gratitude of the *other*, which he expressed in a series of letters, from whence the following has been selected for publication on this occasion: —

be collected in the city of Worcester, or its immediate neighbourhood, as may appear to him to be adapted to the circumstances, of which, some time before, he had received a confidential communication."

"Sir, Guildford Street, 19th Nov. 1801.

* * * "I should probably not have presumed to address you so soon, if I had not been encouraged to do so by the message which I received from you through Mr. Adams. I have no words to express the gratitude with which that message and the whole of your conduct have filled me, but it will not be difficult for a mind capable of so much kindness as yours to conceive. * * *

"I have taken the liberty of enclosing a copy of Lord Wellesley's minutes respecting the college. * * * It is a composition so masterly, and appears to me so fully to make out the connexion between the proposed college and the most important interests of the British empire in India, that, should you have half an hour's leisure, I hope you will look it over. After you have done so, I should be extremely desirous to have the honour of a little conversation with you at any disengaged moment. * * * However the affair may terminate, I must always feel it to be a great honour that I have been thought worthy of so much kindness by such a person as you. If that kindness should be successful, I trust I may promise with confidence that no part of my conduct will ever disgrace it; and that you will never have reason to lament that you enabled me to provide for my family by means which, at the same time, promoted an important plan of public benefit.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obliged and grateful humble servant,

"JAMES MACKINTOSH."

Mr. Addington's second unsuccessful attempt to forward Mr. Mackintosh's views related to some office at Madras, which was in the patronage of Mr. Mills. No particulars have been preserved respecting this transaction, but the fact itself is mentioned in a letter which Mr. Mackintosh addressed to the Minister's private secretary on the 3d of March, 1802.*

* In a conversation with the author in 1842, Lord Sidmouth spoke with much approbation of the line which Sir James Mack-

Amidst the ceaseless labours of his unthankful position, Mr. Addington was cheered by the receipt of two letters from abroad, which must have convinced him, that, however his services might be undervalued at home, he stood high in the estimation of those who were placed beyond the vortex of political excitement or intrigue. The first was addressed to him by Lord Nelson, under an erroneous impression that he had accepted the honour of the Garter, which subsequently he twice declined.

"My dear Sir, Victory, Madalina, Dec. 26th, 1803.

"Having addressed my public letters to Lord Hobart, I only take up one moment of your time to congratulate you on the Blue Ribbon which the French papers tell us you have got. Without a compliment, I do not believe, for honour and virtue, it could have been more properly bestowed; and may you live in health and happiness many many years to enjoy it, is the most sincere wish of,

"My dear Sir, your attached friend,

"NELSON AND BRONTE."

This letter from our greatest naval hero was succeeded by one from Marquis Wellesley, containing the following eloquent description of the earlier military exploits of the most renowned of all England's generals: —

intosh had taken on the resumption of hostilities in 1815. He also observed, that he was considered so much Sir James's friend, that when the latter returned from India and was supposed to be indifferent as to whose side he took, he (Lord Sidmouth) was commissioned by Mr. Perceval to invite him to join the government. He attached himself, however, to Lord Grey. On the same occasion his Lordship stated, that "Mackintosh subsequently regretted the line he had taken at the French revolution, and visited Burke, or, as was humorously said at the time, received absolution from the Pope at Beaconsfield."

"My dear Addington, Barrackpore, 31st Dec. 1803.

* * * "My public duty will not permit me to be silent respecting Major-General Wellesley. His march from Mysore to Poonah, his able conduct of the measures adopted for restoring the Peishwah, for conciliating the feudatory Mahratta chiefs who maintained their allegiance to the Peishwah, for preserving the dominions of the Nizam, and our interest at Hydrabad, combined with his sieges of Ahmednugger, Boorhanpoor, and Asseerchur, his glorious and splendid victories at Assaye and on the plains of Argaum, with the entire ruin of Scindia's French troops and powerful artillery in the Deccan, must place the name of General Wellesley among the most bright and distinguished characters that have adorned the military history of the British power in India. He is now employed in reducing the main fortress of Berar, and in negotiating, with the utmost judgment and skill, the conditions of peace. I leave his merits to your justice, and to the judgment of his king and country. The pride and honour of being allied by the nearest ties of blood to such an officer cannot absolve me from the obligations of my public station, as the representative of the supreme civil and military authority in India; and I cannot, therefore, omit this testimony to the merits of General Wellesley without a positive violation of my duty." * * *

At the commencement of the year 1804 it became the duty of the government to appoint a new chief secretary for Ireland, in consequence of the retirement, through ill health, of that highly efficient and respected functionary, Mr. Wickham. The circumstances connected with this event are sufficiently explained in the following letter, which Mr. Addington addressed to Mr. Yorke on the 5th of January: —

"My dear Sir, Downing Street, 11 P. M.

"The information contained in the enclosed letter is unfortunate and embarrassing. The loss to the public service of such a man as Wickham must at any period be severe: at the

present it is peculiarly so; instead, however, of employing our time in lamenting it, we must consider and determine how it can be best supplied. Of all the persons who have occurred to me, I am disposed to give the preference to Sir Evan Nepean. The business of Ireland is not new to him; under Lord North, Lord Sydney, Lord Grenville, and Lord Melville, he was Under Secretary of State in the Home Department: he is acquainted with the names, the system, and the projects of the disaffected, in the development of which he was at one time peculiarly useful. Added to this, his mind has been familiarised to military and naval concerns; and he possesses, in an eminent degree, diligence, judgment, temper, and address. This is an idea of my own, and has not been imparted to any one. I beg you to reflect upon it, and to let me know your sentiments. * * * To-morrow we probably shall have a communication from the Duke of York on the state of the regular army, and on the best mode of recruiting it. These are points which must be well considered and determined upon before the meeting of parliament."

It must have been a satisfactory and advantageous circumstance to the Prime Minister to possess so attached and efficient a coadjutor as Mr. Yorke, who highly approved of the above suggestion, and accordingly Sir Evan Nepean was appointed to the arduous office for which he had thus been selected. The royal pleasure on this appointment was expressed in the following terms: —

"Windsor, Jan. 11th, 1804.

"The King is sorry to find, by Mr. Addington's note, that the health of Mr. Wickham has so much declined as to oblige him to retire from the duties of principal secretary in Ireland. No one could have occurred more proper in the present state of that country than Sir Evan Nepean."

As this is the last occasion upon which particular allusion will be made to Ireland during the remaining

period of Mr. Addington's administration, advantage is taken of it to present an extract from a letter in which he defined to Mr. Wickham the rule by which he was guided in the exercise of his patronage: —

"Jan. 1st, 1804.

"As I think it right that every thing which relates to official appointments in Ireland should pass through the channel of the Irish government, I send you the enclosed letter from ——. Be so good as to consult the Lord Chancellor, and to let me know the result. In the disposal of a judicial situation, above all others, I should adhere strictly to the principle of 'detur digniori;' and whatever may be my wish and disposition to gratify —— as a friend of government, it is superfluous to add that I am not the less desirous of the observance of this principle in the present instance."

Mr. Addington had expressed a similar anxiety to promote none but men of merit, and to bind the high functionaries of the church and the law to the strict performance of their public duties, in his correspondence with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, as is shown by the following passage in a reply from Lord Redesdale, dated on the 28th of October in the preceding year: —

"I received late last night your letter of the 23d. With respect to the residence of the bishops, I have no doubt that the country would support you most thoroughly in any endeavour to compel it; and I have little doubt that resolution would produce obedience. I have, I think, brought the judges to consider this in a proper point of view; and I think none of them will, in future, leave Ireland without asking leave of the Lord Lieutenant. The residence of the bishops is of infinite importance; and the Archbishop is so very quiet a man that I am sure he would not have complained on this head if he had not felt it to be a serious grievance, and generally complained of."

If, then, the reader should have imagined, from the great attention now paid to such subjects, that promoting the residence of the Irish clergy is a question of recent origin, he will be surprised to find that it constituted a topic of correspondence between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of Ireland more than forty years ago.

CHAPTER XXII.

1804.

The King's Illness. Letter from the Duke of Kent. Extracts from Mr. Abbot's Diary. Letters from Lords Nelson and Wellesley, and Mr. Sheridan. Coalition of Parties in Opposition to the Government. Progress of the Opposition. Letter from Mr. Erskine to Mr. Bond. Mr. Pitt joins the Coalition. His Motion on the State of the Navy. Critical Position of the Government. Remarks. The Volunteer Consolidation Bill passes the Commons. Mr. Addington's Speech on the Irish Militia Act. That Measure carried by only Twenty-one. Mr. Fox's Motion on the Defence of the Country. Letters of the Hon. P. Lamb and Sir Robert Salisbury. Mr. Sheridan votes with the Prince of Wales's Friends against the Government. Mr. Abbot's Account of the Debate and Division. Equanimity of Mr. Addington. Debate on the Army of Reserve Bill. Mr. Pitt. Majority diminished to Thirty-seven.

THE parliament had adjourned until the 1st of February, during which interval Mr. Addington could not venture to leave town for a single day. The subjects which principally occupied his attention in the recess were the finances, and the necessary preparations against invasion; to which another element of danger and difficulty, alluded to in the following letter, which he wrote to his brother on the 24th of January, was shortly to be added — the illness of the King: — * * * "I have been closely confined during the whole of the recess. Some of our ships are again driven from their stations off Brest, and the

wind is now at S. E. This is favourable to the chief and immediate object of the enemy: whether they will profit by it remains to be seen. You will conclude that it is to Ireland that I refer, respecting which my opinion has never varied. * * * His Majesty is materially better; his complaint has been rheumatic gout. * * * The pain is nearly gone, but the foot is still considerably swelled." This favourable report was founded on the following letter, which Mr. Addington received from the royal patient on the same day. The improvement, however, proved fallacious; and the disorder subsequently assumed a character which not only added to the Minister's difficulties, but, by making it advisable for a considerable time afterwards to relieve his Majesty, as far as possible, from the necessity of mental exertion, constituted one of the leading causes of the ultimate success of his opponents: —

"Queen's Palace, January 24th, 1804.

"The King has the satisfaction of acquainting Mr. Addington that the pain in the foot seems quite removed, but the swelling is still too great to enable Sir Francis Milman to consent to the King's having a levee to-morrow at St. James's, which is therefore postponed to Wednesday, February 1st, and the drawing-room to Thursday, February 9th. The King will be very happy to have a privy council here to-morrow at two o'clock, and to receive any of the ministers that day, either previous or subsequent to the privy council, as may best suit them.

"GEORGE R."

The following day brought Mr. Addington another improved report, under the hand of the royal patient himself; and the author has lying before him three more letters on routine business, written by his Ma-

jesty on the 29th of January, and the 5th and 7th of February, all of which indicate his usual health and self-possession.

On the 8th of February, also, as is evident from the annexed letter, addressed to Mr. Addington on the following day by his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, not only was his Majesty equal to a long and interesting conversation, but there was nothing in his Majesty's manner or sentiments to excite the apprehensions of so dutiful and affectionate a son : —

"Kensington Palace, Thursday morning,
"Dear Sir, Feb. 9th, 1804, half-past six o'clock.

"I cannot feel easy until I have fulfilled a duty which gratitude imposes upon me with regard to you, and therefore at this early hour take up my pen to express the high obligation under which I feel myself to you for the truly friendly part you have acted towards me in your communications with the King, the effects of which I felt yesterday afternoon in a manner highly gratifying. The King was pleased *of himself* spontaneously to commence the conversation, and to say that he had at once, when you spoke to him upon this point, approved of my retaining those emoluments I enjoyed before as governor of Gibraltar; from which situation, he was graciously pleased to add, he had not the most distant wish or intention of removing me. This was still enhanced by the King's condescending to express how sensible he was of the zeal I had evinced in his Majesty's service. All this, you will easily understand, was like balm to my feelings; and I never can forget that it is to your manly and, allow me to add, truly friendly interference, that I owe this. I will not now trespass any longer upon your time, but conclude by subscribing myself, with sentiments of the highest regard and esteem, dear Sir, yours most faithfully and truly,

"EDWARD."

These marks of convalescence, however, unfortunately were not permanent; and on the 13th of

February, and following days, Mr. Abbot is found thus expressing his anxiety on the subject: —

"The King, whose attack of the gout had at first appeared to be slight, has grown worse lately, and yesterday the fever was very high.

"*February* 15*th.* — The King not better to-day. On Thursday he was apparently well at the council. On Friday he is said to have drunk cold water, and to have been worse since.

"*February* 16*th.* — Called on Mr. Addington, but did not see him. The cabinet were sitting, and physicians going into the room. Mr. Addington was with the Prince of Wales at eleven. Bulletin, that 'no material alteration had taken place since yesterday.'

"*February* 17*th.* — Saw Mr. Addington for the first time since the King's illness. The King had foreseen it coming on, and had made arrangements as in case of his death. The Queen and royal family had put themselves entirely in the hands of the ministers*, and the council had examined the physicians as to the probable duration of the disorder. If it should appear likely to be prolonged, a regency must ensue. Mr. Addington had completely made up his mind upon the business."

On the 18th of February Mr. Abbot represented his Majesty's state as improved; and two days afterwards he stated that the King was recovering fast; and from that date until the 7th of March the journal records his Majesty's uninterrupted progress towards convalescence. On the last-mentioned day Dr. Symons's note to Mr. Addington is quoted, in which

* This was effected by delivering a paper to Mr. Addington, "signed by the Queen and nine of his Majesty's children, assembled at the Queen's House on Wednesday night, February 15th, 1804, accepting, with thanks, the offer which had been made by the King's confidential servants, to relieve them from the care and superintendence of his Majesty on that trying occasion."

"he had the happiness to say, his Majesty was much better that day than at any time since his illness:" it was now, indeed, understood that "the King was competent to perform any act of government; and that if he went on for the next ten days as he had during the last, he would be perfectly well." This hope was happily realised; and all that remains to be stated on the subject is, that on Sunday, the 26th of February, two authoritative documents were issued, without the cognizance of the government, which contradicted each other: one, a thanksgiving by the Archbishop, for the happy prospect of his Majesty's speedy recovery; the other, a bulletin from the physicians, stating that "though the King was going on favourably, any rapid amendment was not to be expected." This report, as his Majesty was really much better, excited some disapprobation, and occasioned several questions and remarks in parliament on the following day. On that occasion Mr. Addington stated to the House, "that there was no necessary impediment to his Majesty's exercising his royal functions;" and it was explained, that the physicians only meant to intimate by the words objected to, that although the King was now perfectly competent to any act of government, *it would be prudent for some time to spare him all unnecessary exertion of mind.*

Mr. Addington's administration was now drawing to a close; but before the circumstances are detailed which led to that result, it appears desirable to insert extracts from letters written about this period by the same two distant friends mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, offering pleasing testimony to his com-

petency for the duties which he was about to resign. The first is dated

"Victory, off Toulon, March 19th, 1804.

"My dear Sir,

"As I write all my public civil matters, by your desire, to Lord Hobart, my letter is merely to repeat my respect both for your public character as a minister, and your private one as a man. I still hope that Bonaparte's government will be upset by *Frenchmen;* and then we may have a permanent peace. I stated, formerly, my opinion of Sardinia to Lord Hobart: it is an invaluable possession in every respect; it is the Ceylon of the Mediterranean. We hope to meet the French fleet every hour; and, from our health and good humour, every thing may be expected. With sincere good wishes for your administration being the most glorious in our history, believe me ever, my dear Sir, your most attached friend,

"Nelson and Bronte.

"The Right Hon. Henry Addington."

The above letter and that which follows from Lord Wellesley, arriving as they did after Mr. Addington's retirement from office, must have been most gratifying to his feelings. The latter, moreover, is important in an historical light, since it refutes an accusation made in parliament against the ministers, that they had permitted Admiral Linois' escape from capture in the East Indies, by neglecting to transmit early intelligence of the war to that quarter of the globe*:—

[Private and confidential.]

"My dear Addington, Barrackpore, Jan. 1st, 1804.

"I return you many thanks for your kind letter received by Colonel Monson. From a verbal intimation which I understood you to have made to Sir T. Metcalfe for my inform-

* Debate in the House of Lords of April 19th.

ation, a few hours previously to Colonel Monson's departure, I received the first positive intelligence of the certainty of a renewal of hostilities with France. I concur entirely in the justice and necessity of the war; and you may rely on my support in the prosecution of it to the last moment of my existence, in whatever situation I may be required to act or to advise. * * * I have not received a line from Pitt since his resignation, excepting one short note recommending a young man to my attention. I hope, however, that his health is recovered, and that your cordiality subsists, notwithstanding newspaper reports. I cannot express the pain I have experienced, in observing some appearances which seem to indicate a separation between you and Pitt—'Dii meliora piis, erroremque hostibus illum.' Whatever may be the truth of these reports, the war must be cordially supported; and I hope that I may be permitted to contribute my zealous aid against the common enemy, without offence to any of my friends. Ever, my dear Addington, yours most sincerely and affectionately,

"WELLESLEY."

Here, also, it appears advisable to introduce the letter in which Mr. Sheridan announced to Mr. Addington his promotion to the office of Receiver-General of the county of Cornwall, which took place on the 3d of March. The appointment had no necessary connexion with this biography; but the fame of the writer, and the gratitude due for the support he so often afforded to Mr. Addington, alike demand the insertion of the letter: —

[Private.]

"Dear Sir, George Street, Tuesday evening.

"Convinced, as I am, of the sincerity of your good-will towards me, I do not regard it to be an impertinent intrusion to inform you, that the Prince has in the most gracious manner, and wholly unsolicited, been pleased to appoint me to the late Lord Elliot's situation in the Duchy of Cornwall.

I wish to communicate this to you myself, because I feel a confidence that you will be glad of it. It has been my pride and pleasure to have exerted my humble efforts to serve the Prince, without ever accepting the slightest obligation from him; but, under the present circumstances, I think it would have been really false pride, and apparently mischievous affectation, to have declined this mark of his Royal Highness's confidence and favour. I will not disguise that, at this peculiar crisis, I do feel greatly gratified at this event: had it been the result of a mean and subservient devotion to the Prince's every wish and object, I could neither have respected the gift, the giver, or myself; but when I consider how recently it was my misfortune to find myself compelled by a sense of duty, stronger than my attachment to him, wholly to risk the situation I held in his confidence and favour, I cannot but regard the increased attention with which he has since honoured me as a most gratifying demonstration that he has clearness of judgment, and firmness of spirit, to distinguish his real friends from the mean and mercenary sycophants who fear and abhor that such friends should be near him. It is satisfactory to me, also, that this appointment gives me the title and opportunity of seeing the Prince on trying occasions openly and in the face of day, and puts aside the marks of mystery and concealment. * * * I have the honour to be, Sir, with the sincerest respect and esteem, your obedient servant,

"R. B. Sheridan."

The only remaining event which demands notice before the catastrophe of the administration is approached is the death of Lord Alvanley, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, which occurred on the 19th of March. On the 22d of the same month, the chief justiceship was offered to Lord Redesdale, who, after so far hesitating as to refer the question to the decision of Lord Eldon and Mr. Addington, finally declined the honour, which was then conferred upon Sir James Mansfield.

It is now necessary to describe the proceedings of that powerful confederacy to whose opposition in parliament Mr. Addington shortly afterwards considered it his duty to give place. Both Houses assembled, pursuant to adjournment, on the 1st of February; but whether or not the three great parties, headed respectively by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham, and combining such an amount of political talent, knowledge, and experience as probably no minister was ever assailed with before, had then resolved to combine their forces, the author has no certain means of determining. He infers, however, from the languor of the earlier proceedings in parliament, either that their plans were not yet organised, or that the King's unexpected illness occasioned the postponement of them. The earlier debates of the session—that especially of the 8th of February, when Mr. Yorke obtained leave to bring in a bill for consolidating the various acts relating to yeomanry and volunteer corps—presented no addition to the usual opponents of the government; and it was not until the 19th of February that Mr. Abbot inserted in his diary the following notice of a junction between the old and new opposition:—"It is stated, on unquestionable authority, that Mr. Fox has, upon the invitation of the Grenvilles, agreed to join them in parliamentary measures, and has written to his friends to know if they will support him. Erskine has not yet returned an answer."

On the 20th of February, Mr. Abbot resumes the subject:—"The Grenvilles have made overtures to Mr. Fox, to which he has acceded, but many of his party declare they will in that case separate from

him. So have said the Duke of Newcastle, Sheridan, Erskine, and others. Mr. Pitt palliates the conduct of the Grenvilles, though he does not join them, or declare what his own line will be. He speaks, however, with great spleen and ill-humour of the measures of government." The diary of the 23d pursues the subject thus: — "Saw Mr. Addington. The junction of the Grenville party with Mr. Fox is called by them a co-operation, not a coalition. Their language is, that they mean to turn out the present administration, that the King may be free to choose other ministers: *they* have none to propose. This was *my* intelligence, and Mr. Addington had heard the same. Mr. Pitt had recently acknowledged to Lord Chatham that he had no ground of complaint against Mr. Addington, and through Steele had sent a private assurance that he entertained no feeling whatever of personal hostility towards him." Thus Mr. Pitt, it appears, was in a position far more to be pitied than envied; still fluctuating between attachment to his early friend, a reluctance to depart from his promise to support the government, and those newly-adopted and fanciful notions respecting the obligation of his public duty, which, after a due consideration of all the circumstances, it is scarcely possible to regard as the spontaneous growth of his own mind. Of the sentiments of Mr. Erskine, who is twice alluded to in the preceding extracts, a transcript can fortunately be given, by presenting the following letter, found amongst the Sidmouth papers, which, some months before, he addressed to his friend Mr. Bond, at that time one of the Lords of the Treasury: —

From Mr. Erskine to Mr. Bond.

" Dear Nat., Lincoln's Inn Fields, Sept. 10th, 1803.

" I have been reading a pamphlet* which is in great circulation, and which is given by many to *you*. There is a great deal of truth and a great deal of good writing in it; but there is one thing in it which makes me think it *not* yours, viz. that which relates to Fox; because, though I know nobody differs from him more than you do, yet it is not like you to go out of your way to wound the personal feelings of so very great and so very good-natured a man. I wish, with all my heart, that a very great part of the pamphlet may correspond with the truth and with your friend Mr. Addington's sensations; because I should think the return of the old administration into power would be the greatest evil and calamity which could overtake England. I believe that a very considerable part of the harsh and sanguinary spirit of the late administration was attributable to the Grenvilles. Pitt was haughty and lofty; but I never thought him malignant till the night we walked home together after his famous division in the House of Commons†: and I have no doubt that all his divisions will be of the same kind, *as soon as it is well understood that Mr. Addington is not still politically connected with him;* because I do personally know a great many independent men whose conduct in parliament (when it meets) will very much depend upon that circumstance; *and who would much rather support Mr. Addington's administration, even if Mr. Pitt had office in it,* than when he stands in that equivocal situation of countenancing or discountenancing, supporting and opposing, and seeming, as it were, to turn aside what he condemns, and arrogating to himself the merit of what is good. I do not mean to say that Mr. Addington can at all help this state of things, or that he is in any way to blame; but I do say that it produces

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* This was Mr. Bentley's " Cursory Remarks. By a near Observer." The first shot fired in the paper war of 1803.

† That of the 3d of June, 1803, when Mr. Pitt moved the orders of the day.

nothing but weakness to his administration, and that it is a public misfortune. There are many of my friends who speak with great complacency of a coalition with Pitt; but that, I am persuaded, can never happen; because Fox could not (if he were disposed to it) carry such a disgusting measure with his own friends. With me he certainly could not, nor with many more whom I could name.

"Yours ever, T. ERSKINE."

Within six months after the preceding letter was written, the coalition therein pronounced impossible actually took place; but the writer, much to his credit, was not a participator. The first occasion on which Mr. Pitt permitted indications of approaching hostility to escape him, was on his re-appearance in the House of Commons at the second reading of the Volunteer Consolidation Bill, on the 27th of February; when, though he did not oppose the motion, he reflected generally on the ministerial measures of defence, as not sufficiently vigorous for the occasion, and expressed his decided difference from the sentiments of Mr. Yorke, and his entire concurrence with those of Mr. Windham. The development, however, of the mystery, under which he had hitherto concealed his intentions, was reserved for the 15th of March, on which day he commenced his attack upon the administration, by moving for a series of papers relating to the naval defence of the country. He complained on that occasion that a sufficient number of small gun-boats, to act in shoal water, which he considered the species of craft best calculated to defeat any attempt at invasion, had not been provided. This neglect he compared with the energy which had been shown towards the close of the former war, in providing a force of a

similar description. He then referred to what he considered the deficient state of the navy at the commencement of the war; and after eulogising the system of building ships of the line by contract, in merchants' yards, and assuming credit, on behalf of the late administration, for having caused twenty-seven to be so built in the last war, accused the Admiralty of having, during the subsisting one, ordered only two. Mr. Pitt concluded with a comparison between the naval preparations of the past and present wars in the first years of each, and stated, that in the former case we commenced with 16,000 seamen, who were augmented to 75,000; whilst in the latter case the 50,000 with which hostilities began were only increased to 86,000.

The above objections, which, viewed at this distance of time, certainly appear extremely frivolous, were all satisfactorily refuted in the course of the debate. The powerful fleets with which we kept Brest, Toulon, Ferrol, and other ports blockaded, and prevented the enemy from showing his flag at all on the ocean; and the sailing of the Channel fleet for Brest, and of Nelson for the Mediterranean, the instant war was declared, were facts appealed to as a proof that the Admiralty were not taken by surprise at the commencement of hostilities. The flat-bottomed gunboats, which Mr. Pitt so strongly recommended, were treated with merited derision by Rear Admiral Sir Edward Pellew, M. P. for Barnstaple, who termed them "a mosquito fleet—the most contemptible force that could be employed. I see nothing," Sir Edward continued, "in the arrangement of our naval defence to excite the apprehension even of the most timid amongst us; but, on the contrary, every thing to

inspire us with confidence. We have a triple naval bulwark, composed of one fleet, acting on the enemy's coast; of another, consisting of heavier ships, stationed in the Downs, ready to act at a moment's notice; and of a third, close to the beach, capable of destroying any part of the enemy's flotilla that should escape the vigilance of the other two branches of our defence." Sir Edward and other professional speakers also expressed their astonishment at Mr. Pitt's partiality for building ships by contract, which was "a mode of keeping up our navy of which they strongly disapproved. I can assert, with confidence," was the Rear-Admiral's concluding remark, "that our navy was never better found, that it was never better supplied, and that our men were never better fed or better clothed. Have we not all the enemy's ports blockaded, from Toulon to Flushing? Are we not able to cope any where with the enemy's forces? Nay, do we not outnumber them in every port which we are blockading?"*

* The author will be forgiven, he trusts, for inserting in this place the following remarks on this speech, which dropped from Mr. Sheridan at a later period of the debate: — "The statement of the gallant officer was a satisfactory reply to all the arguments that have been advanced this evening. In that speech, which applied as forcibly to the heart as the understanding, the honourable baronet manifested not only that sincerity which is the general characteristic of the profession of which he is so bright an ornament, but also a considerable share of acuteness and judgment. He made some very pertinent remarks also on the nature of those gun-boats which seem to be such favourites of the right honourable gentleman, but of which the honourable baronet does not appear at all to approve; and from my own observation I certainly am disposed to agree with that gallant officer, who is much more competent to judge upon the subject than the right honourable gentleman or any other statesman."

As regarded Mr. Pitt's remark, that there was a larger number of seamen raised in 1793 than in 1803, the statement fully explained itself. In the former case the peace establishment amounted but to 16,000; consequently the great body of British seamen was unemployed, and had only to be collected and received into the navy; but in the latter case the number of seamen already engaged in the public service amounted to 50,000; a smaller additional number, therefore, was required, and a smaller number also remained available for employment.

The result of this debate, which was remarkable as the first important occasion on which the three sections of opposition acted in conjunction, is thus entered in Mr. Abbot's diary: — "Upon the contested papers, Mr. Pitt, Fox, and the Grenvilles divided. For the motion, 130; Mr. Addington (with the Prince of Wales's friends) against it, 201.

As Mr. Pitt had himself recommended Lord St. Vincent to Mr. Addington as the most suitable person to preside at the Admiralty*, it appears singular that he should have selected the naval administration as the first point of attack. But the truth is, that the Board over which the noble Earl presided was regarded by many persons, perhaps not wholly without reason, with much dissatisfaction. The extent to which it had carried its retrenchments; its busy investigation into past transactions, in the hope of detecting some ground of inculpation, and the total absence of a conciliatory spirit in its proceedings, were evils generally complained of; insomuch, that Lord Sid-

* From Lord Sidmouth's conversation with the author, Feb. 5th, 1841.

mouth, when speaking in after years of the downfal of his government, used always to mention the conduct of the board of Admiralty as one of the prominent causes. The inquiries of the Board were doubtless well intended, but not being influenced by judgment or moderation, neither the First Lord nor his colleagues were by any means favourites amongst their contemporaries; and although, as the result proved, their preparations were indeed equal to the occasion, still it cannot, probably, be denied, that their plans of retrenchment and reform were carried, during the peace, to a farther extent than the state of political affairs altogether warranted.*

Mr. Addington's position had now become extremely painful and critical. No minister indeed, however powerful, could have expected long to withstand so formidable a combination of nearly all the most eminent statesmen of the age as was now arrayed against him. Mr. Pitt himself, when shortly afterwards he assumed the government, must have yielded to circumstances precisely similar, if Mr. Addington, instead of exercising a forbearance which he had not experienced, had

* Mr. Addington, when writing to his brother from Worthing, September 4th, 1804, observed—"Lord St. Vincent's system of naval defence is highly approved of by all the sea-faring people I have met with here who are acquainted with the navigation of the Channel, and I have good reason for believing that it is by no means discountenanced by the present Board of Admiralty." Four days afterwards he wrote somewhat exultingly to Mr. Bathurst—"Ships of war have been, are, and will be, coming forward faster than it has been or will be possible to man them." Here he touched upon the real question. With such an enormous proportion of land forces on foot, a sufficient number of seamen could not be procured for the navy. The ships were ready, but the men were absent.

acted towards him in the same manner in which he had himself been treated, by joining Mr. Fox and the opposition. It must be allowed that the eminent leaders of the co-operating parties considered they were fulfilling a public duty in thus endeavouring to substitute their own views for those of the existing administration. But had they reflected that they differed from each other quite as much as they did from Mr. Addington; and *that* also upon such important questions, as whether the defence of the country might best be intrusted to regular troops, to volunteers, or to an armed population*, they probably would have hesitated before they selected, at the very moment of an expected invasion, the supposed defective state of the national bulwarks as the ground of their public attack upon the government. It was then too late, in the face of a prepared enemy, to remodel the whole system of defence by substituting one description of force for another; and the slightest hint from such high authorities respecting the inadequacy of the preparations must have tended to inspirit the enemy, and, probably, to accelerate his approach. It may be conjectured, therefore, that the coalition either did not seriously believe that

* Mr. Pitt placed great confidence in the volunteers: Mr. Windham thought very highly of the regulars, but indifferently of the militia, and very lightly of the volunteer system. Mr. Fox, on the 23d of April, spoke of "the general importance of calling forth the exertions of an armed peasantry," by which he meant ploughmen, &c. &c. armed with pikes; but he expressly refrained from giving "any detailed plan on this head, nor would he say how far such service should be voluntary or compulsory." This only shows how much easier it is to condemn the plan of another than to suggest a better.

Bonaparte was resolute in his purpose of invasion at that conjuncture, or that their real opinion of the preparations differed from that represented in their speeches; and consequently that they saw no danger to the country in their availing themselves of an argument against the government, which, though indefinite in its nature, and resting solely on opinion, was yet, on that account, both easy to apply, and difficult to refute. There is not any more arduous undertaking than to place a country like England, where the tread of an hostile array has not been heard for centuries, in a perfect state of military preparation; and had the question at that time been submitted to parliament, What is the best mode of calling out the whole strength of the kingdom to repel invasion? —when the details came under consideration, there would probably have been almost as many opinions as there were members. Neither, when the national preparations are completed, is it easy, amidst the numberless errors and exaggerations resulting from fear, ignorance, and misrepresentation, to satisfy the public that such preparations are adequate to the occasion: for this is a question to which no decisive answer can be given until the event shall have been ascertained; and in the interim each individual will form his opinion respecting it according to the particular state of his knowledge, judgment, and feelings. No circumstances, therefore, could have been more favourable than those in which England then stood to enable a talented and active opposition to exercise great influence upon the public mind. The danger was imminent; it was doubtful whether, under the ablest management, the country was equal to the emergency;

and several of the wisest and most experienced statesmen it ever possessed had declared against the measures of government. It was not surprising, then, that the nation, thus influenced, should have desired that the whole available stock of political ability might be united in its service; and especially that the same pilot who had weathered the former storm should now assist in conducting the vessel of state through the impending tempest. Could Mr. Addington have attached to himself any of the great parties now united against him, he might have stood his ground; but with Mr. Fox circumstances rendered this step impossible; the Grenvilles were too highly exasperated, and Mr. Pitt had already declined his alliance. His position, therefore, from this moment, was most precarious; his only hope of security consisted in the absence, amongst those opposed to him, of any principle of cohesion, except hostility to his administration.

The new allies made no farther serious effort with their united strength prior to the Easter recess. The leading measure of government for regulating and improving the volunteer system was indeed disputed in every stage; but Mr. Pitt and Mr. Windham entertained conflicting views as to the utility of that force; and hence there could be no co-operation between them on the subject. The Volunteers' Consolidation Bill, therefore, after numerous delays, passed the Commons, and on the 27th of March obtained a second reading in the Lords, at which point it was then suspended by the adjournment of the House for the Easter recess.

None of the letters written by Mr. Addington at this period have been preserved. He could have had

little leisure for that purpose, and probably all the friends with whom he was accustomed to correspond confidentially were now collected around him. Parliament re-assembled, after the holidays, on the 5th of April. The first material debate in the House of Commons occurred on the 11th of April, when Mr. Yorke moved the committal of the Irish Militia Augmentation Bill—an important measure, intended to promote the interchange of the troops of the two kingdoms, by enabling his Majesty to fill up the vacancy in the Irish militia, should it be determined to transfer 10,000 of them to this country. The motion was opposed by Mr. Fox and the Grenvilles; but Mr. Pitt did not either speak or vote on the occasion. The opponents consequently divided only thirty-seven to ninety-four. This debate was rendered interesting by a very animated reply which Mr. Addington made to Mr. Fox; in which, after ably defending his measures against the attacks of his assailant, he accurately stated the amount of the forces of all arms then embodied in the United Kingdom. Mr. Fox had complained, that nothing had been done by the ministers to bring the war to a conclusion: to this Mr. Addington replied—

"That they had, on the contrary, taken the most effectual means to promote the cessation of hostilities. They had shown the enemy that his views must be disappointed; that whether he pursues or abandons his plans of attack on this country, he cannot escape the mortification which must ever attend disappointed ambition. The honourable gentleman," he proceeded, "has thought it correct to say, that no event has yet happened in the present war which has redounded to the glory of the British arms. Was there no glory, then, in the conquest of St. Lucia? no energy in the prompt transmission of orders

to the West Indies, which led to the early reduction of Tobago? and are we to exclude from our observation the recent victories in the East, under those gallant leaders Generals Lake and Wellesley? Far be it from me to arrogate to ministers the glory of these expeditions. Let the laurel decorate the brows of those brave warriors, and ever flourish fresh and green around their temples; but let it not be said that no triumphs have been obtained, that no honours have rewarded British valour. The obstructions we have had to surmount have been accurately detailed by my right honourable friend, Mr. Yorke. That we might adequately oppose the greatest military empire recorded in the annals of mankind, we have increased our regular army to the utmost extent that the population and circumstances of the state would admit of; and this not being sufficient, it was further necessary to raise a large voluntary force by availing ourselves of the military spirit of the people. By these means we have now a greater number of soldiers than France, or any other country in the world, can boast of. I state this without fear of contradiction, for I know its truth. * * * I admit that the voluntary zeal of the people has essentially contributed to this great object; and all the credit I presume to claim is, for having directed this powerful torrent of patriotism into its proper channel, so that, instead of producing confusion, it has promoted the public advantage. A few facts will support the position I have assumed. The effective force, including the militia, in Great Britain and Ireland, is 184,000 men; the volunteers compose a body of 400,000, all of whom are armed with firelocks, excepting about 15,000 or 20,000 men. Thus there are 580,000 men ready for the defence of the two islands. * * * I recollect, with the warmest pleasure, that by the prudent measure of maintaining treble the ordinary peace establishment, those means were taken which were most conducive to the national security under the event of war: the result has fully justified the system adopted; and we have now to congratulate the country on its success."

On the 16th of April another division took place, on

this bill upon the third reading, when the majority was reduced to only twenty-one. This is accounted for, in Mr. Abbot's diary (the extracts from which will now be resumed), by Mr. Pitt's having attended, and "voted in the minority with Fox and the Grenvilles." "Earlier in the day," the diary proceeds, "Lord Morpeth mentioned the publication, by the French government, of Mr. Drake's supposed correspondence with the conspirators against Bonaparte, and Talleyrand's note to the foreign ministers in France, and their answers. Mr. Addington most indignantly denied that any instruction or countenance whatever had been given by his Majesty's government to Mr. Drake, or to any other minister or person, to act in any manner contrary to the acknowledged law of nations. He stated, also, that no accounts had been received from Mr. Drake relative to the transaction in question." On the 18th of April the Volunteer Association Bill, after several divisions, at length obtained its third reading in the House of Lords, and was returned to the Commons as amended. On the following day, in the same House, the government, on refusing papers in reference to a charge, made by Lord Carlisle, of the tardy conveyance of intelligence of the war to the admiral commanding in India, was left in a minority of one. In justification of government Lord Hawkesbury assured the House, that so far from any neglect having occurred, instructions had been three times despatched to Admiral Rainier—once prior to his Majesty's message to parliament, in March; again between that period and the rupture, and a third time on the latter event.

We now approach the important struggle which occurred in the House of Commons on Monday, the

23d of April, upon Mr. Fox's motion relative to the defence of the country. This was evidently regarded, by both sides, as the trial of strength. There are two letters from the Hon. Peniston Lamb and Sir Robert Salisbury, addressed to Mr. Addington at this period; which clearly show, that the latter had himself written to urge their attendance on the 23d. Mr. Lamb stated, that "although it would be much more in accordance with the views and objects of his family were he to take no part on the present occasion, yet, feeling every wish to support an administration of which Mr. Addington was at the head, and to which the country was much indebted, he should certainly attend on Monday, and give every support in his power to his Majesty's ministers." * Sir Robert Salisbury's communication was equally cordial; and he added the shrewd remark, that if the preparations for defence were defective, which, however, he totally denied, "why should Mr. Pitt point out the defect to the enemy? I am surprised," he added, "that Mr. Pitt should encourage such motions — the man, of all others, who used to deprecate them most. If Mr. Fox makes no better case than *he* did against Lord St. Vincent, you may feel perfectly at ease." Whilst the Minister was thus collecting his forces for defence, doubtless equal diligence was shown on the other side in preparing for the attack. Since the last division, the Opposition had received an important accession of strength in the friends of the Prince of Wales. "The

* The party who, against the wishes of his family, gave this honest testimony to Mr. Addington's merits, was the eldest brother of the present Lord Melbourne, and M.P. for Hertfordshire. He unfortunately died in January, 1805.

Prince," it has been elsewhere observed*, "was at first wavering in his politics, but got finally all the votes he could for the Opposition." This circumstance accounts for the conduct of Mr. Sheridan, who, with the rest of the Prince's friends, voted with the government on the 15th of March, and spoke strongly in their favour, but sided with the Opposition on the 23d of April. His attachment and opinions were clearly with Mr. Addington; and whenever option was left him, as in the recent instance, when he declined to unite with the Grenvilles on Mr. Fox's invitation, he fully acted up to those feelings.

The proceedings of the day, to which both sides looked forward with such anxiety, shall be related in the words of Mr. Abbot's diary:—"April 23d. This day the King held his first council since his illness, and signed proclamations for a general fast, &c. &c. Debate on Mr. Fox's motion on the defence bills, and to consider of the further measures necessary for a complete and permanent defence. Fox, Pitt, and Windham for the motion; Addington, Yorke, Tierney, the Attorney-General, &c. &c. against it. Division, ayes 204, noes 256; majority 52. Mr. Pitt made a long speech of great hostility towards conduct of administration. In this and the division on the 25th Mr. Fox's friends were very doubtful of deriving any benefit from their co-operation with Mr. Pitt. Mr. Courtenay said, 'We are the pioneers, digging the foundations; but Mr. Pitt will be the architect to build the house, and to inhabit it.' It was afterwards said that, upon this and the following debate, Mr. Pitt

* Lord Malmesbury's Diary, vol. iv. p. 298.

had written to the King, stating, at great length, the reasons of his votes upon these questions."

The only new feature in this debate was the reduction of the majority to fifty-two. The Opposition merely repeated their former general declamations on the inadequacy of the means of defence provided by government, and the latter replied by a statement of facts and numbers, from which it appeared that within the past year not less than 200,000 men had been raised in the United Kingdom for recruiting the army and navy, and that, including sea fencibles, garrisons, and troops in the colonies, his Majesty had in the whole a force little short of 800,000, which exceeded by 200,000 the largest number of men which the enemy could bring forward. Mr. Fox's motion contained a strange recommendation, to take from government the direction of all measures requisite for the defence of the country, and to place them under the control of a committee of the whole House. Mr. Addington answered Mr. Fox, and was himself followed by Mr. Pitt, in a speech of vague and intemperate invective, in which he attributed all that was good in the preparations to the spirit of a free and gallant people, and whatever he thought defective in them to the tardiness, languor, and imbecility of ministers.* The result of this debate, from various

* Towards the close of his speech, Mr. Pitt alluded with some degree of warmth to Sir Edward Pellew, as "an officer who had been brought from a distant station to support the present system and throw obloquy upon *him*." This was altogether a mistake; but with reference to the circumstance, Lord Sidmouth more than once, in after-years, observed to the author — "There were three persons whom Pitt could not readily forgive for their attachment to me — Lord Cornwallis, Sir William Grant, and your father."

circumstances, must have somewhat surprised Mr. Addington; but it appears by the following extract from Mr. Abbot's diary of the 24th, that it did not in the smallest degree affect his equanimity: — "Saw Mr. Addington — in very good spirits, and perfectly at ease about the consequence of this division." A similar good report of him is given by his daughter in the subjoined letter, which she addressed to her brother at Christchurch: —

To Henry Addington, Esq.

"Downing Street, April 24th, 1804.

"The delay in sending my letter gives me an opportunity of informing you of the event of last night's debate. The majority was by no means a triumphant one; the numbers were 204 to 256. I understand my father made an admirable speech in reply to Mr. Fox: on his rising he was cheered, and was very warmly supported by his friends throughout the debate. Mr. Yorke and Mr. Tierney both spoke well, and the Attorney General uncommonly so: Mr. Fox's second speech was very good. I believe I have mentioned the principal features of the debate, and will only add, what I am sure you will rejoice to hear, which is, that my father does not seem in any respect the worse for the fatigue and exertion, though he was not in bed till 5 o'clock. He unites with the rest of our party in kind love to you, with which I will conclude myself Your ever affectionate sister,

"Mary-Anne Addington."

The attack was renewed by the Opposition with increasing hopes on the 25th of April, when Mr. Pitt opposed the order of the day for going into committee on the bill for the suspension of the Army of Reserve Act. The debate on that occasion was thus noticed by Mr. Abbott: — "Upon the question for my leaving the chair, Mr. Pitt opened his plan for keeping up the

army of reserve, with modifications for making it a permanent supply to the regular troops; and at the same time proposing gradually to reduce the militia. Fox, Windham, and Whitbread spoke partially in support of this measure, but with a mixture of hesitation as to an ultimate approbation of the whole. Yorke, Castlereagh, and Addington, for proceeding with the suspension bill. Division: —

For the question - - - -	240
Against it - - - - -	203
Majority in favour of ministers, only	37

CHAPTER XXIII.

1804.

Mr. Addington resolves to resign — Friendly Remonstrance of Mr. Warren Hastings. Communications between the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt — Not correctly explained by Lord Eldon's Biographer. Resignation not finally determined until April 29th. Mr. Addington's Reasons. His Notification to Parliament. His Speech on the Budget, with Lord Bexley's concluding Observations. He resigns the Seals, 10th of May. Letter to Mr. H. Addington. Extracts from Mr. Abbot's Diary. Letter from Mr. Pitt to his Majesty accepting the Government. The King offers an Earldom and Pension to Mr. Addington, which he gratefully declines. Mr. Addington's explanatory Letter to Mr. Hawthorne — King's Letter of 17th May. His Majesty takes leave of his Minister. Mr. Addington retires to Richmond Park. Anecdotes of the King. Letter from Lord Nelson to Mr. Addington on his Retirement. Letter from M. Gentz to Mr. Addington on the same Subject. Reflections on Mr. Addington's Retirement. Mr. Pitt's Treatment of Mr. Addington not to be justified. Difference fomented by private Interference. Coldness between Mr. Addington and Mr. Canning. Accidental Meeting and Reconciliation between them in 1812. Generous Conduct of both Parties. Letter from Dr. Cyril Jackson on the Subject. Reflections thereon. The Preference felt for Mr. Pitt, the real Cause of Mr. Addington's Loss of Parliamentary Confidence. Lord Howick's favourable Opinion of Mr. Addington's Measures of Defence. Wisdom shown in not hastening on a Continental War. Contrary Policy of Mr. Pitt erroneous and disastrous.

It was now evident that the Minister could no longer maintain his ground with the present parliament.

But two nights before his majority had been fifty-two. Nearly a third of that number had now disappeared; and the manner in which this defection occurred was even more discouraging than its amount. It did not arise from any accession to the Opposition, for they divided on each occasion within one of the same number, but was caused by the backsliding of some of the more timid or selfish of his own supporters — a clear proof that in their opinion his power was departing.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Addington at once resolved to resign his office. It was not that he mistook the votes of a parliamentary coalition for the voice of the nation; it was not that he experienced any want of readiness in the highest quarter, or of encouragement from numerous influential parties, to induce him to persevere, even to the extent of appealing to the constituencies: but the danger to the nation, the encouragement to the enemy, and above all, the risk to his Majesty's health, which would result from a prolongation of the existing crisis, forbade him, in his deliberate judgment, from carrying matters to extremities.* In deference, therefore, to his sove-

* Lord Holland once told Lord Sidmouth that he had often heard his uncle, Mr. Fox, say, that he considered the Addington administration the most popular one since the accession, and he need not have resigned with a majority in the House of Commons, and the general voice of the country in his favour. The reply was, that it was to save the King from being driven to the wall by the coalition. Mr. Addington always said it was Mr. Pitt's ascendency in the House of Lords, through the eighty creations he had made, which enabled him to overthrow the government.— *Family Recollections.*

reign's dignity, independence, and peace of mind, he withdrew himself, that the King might exercise his prerogative of choosing his own minister, and not be exposed to the risk of having one forced upon him. The same motives, therefore, of loyalty and patriotism which, three years before, had induced him to accept the government, now led him to resign it. The propriety of this course was admitted, in most instances, by his correspondents. From one party, however, himself remarkable for decision of conduct on trying occasions, Mr. Warren Hastings, he received a friendly remonstrance, which, both by the manliness of its sentiments and the celebrity of the writer, is recommended for insertion in this work. It has elsewhere been stated, that on this occasion Mr. Hastings sought and obtained an interview with Mr. Addington, in the hope of inducing him to stand his ground on the treasury bench; but was convinced, in the conversation which then ensued, of the inexpediency of such a course.

To the Right Honourable Henry Addington.

"I have heard with sorrow that you are on the point of relinquishing your office. An unimportant individual, such as I am, may have more authentic means than either yourself or your personal friends of knowing the sentiments of the people respecting the character and effect of your administration. Believe me, Sir, the voice of the House of Commons is not the voice of the people. This is very generally in your favour, and every day increases the number of your adherents. During the course of the last week I have scarce seen a person who has not execrated the confederacy which has been

formed against you; that has not expressed himself disgusted at the effrontery of so unnatural a combination of discordant interests, connexions, and opinions; and indignant at the savage attack made at such a time on the feelings, the peace, the health, and perhaps the life of the King. The people see and know that an ample, sufficient, and well-distributed provision has been made for their defence against the threatened invasion; they have seen resources called forth for which no one gave this country credit; they are pleased with the economy of the public expenditure; they have proclaimed a spirit of zeal and unanimity which they certainly never showed nor felt during the last war, nor during the late administration; they have not been intimidated by arbitrary arrests and endless imprisonments; and even your enemies admit your integrity, while they profligately sneer at it. Such, Sir, are the characters of your administration; and in what is it defective? I adopt the language of others when I answer, In oratory; in that waste of words and time, which is the invariable substitute for useful matter, and progressive action. Yet they have seen you prompt in reply, candid in explanation, and your mind well stored with all the knowledge which can qualify you to discharge the arduous duties of your station. This remonstrance may be too late: certainly not, if his Majesty's consent has not been decidedly given to your resignation. His opposition to it would justify you to all the world in retracing whatever steps you have taken, and in firmly maintaining the post which he has assigned you. Nay, I know it is universally expected; because you were called to this high trust by the King's own selection: you are the minister of his choice, and of his peculiar confidence. This is the crisis which is to determine the credit, importance, and all the colour of your future life. If you persevere, and succeed, you will rise higher in the public estimation and your own. If you fail, you will be but where you would have been by your own self-dismission; and you will retire, compelled by necessity, with the conscious integrity of not having deserted your country, nor deceived the confidence of your sovereign."

Mr. Addington's determination to retire was not formed until after the debate on the suspension of the Army of Reserve Act on the 25th of April; nor did he notify this intention to the cabinet until Sunday the 29th, on which day also he first gave a cautious intimation of it to Mr. Abbot and two or three of his most confidential friends.

At this period, *i.e.* from as early as the 22d of April, Mr. Pitt was privately addressing letters to the King through the intervention of the Lord Chancellor, with whom he had been in communication ever since the 20th of March, which was but five days after he had openly declared his hostility to the government by his attack on the Admiralty.* Lord Eldon's biographer has offered a conjecture that the communications between his Lordship and Mr. Pitt, in March, related to some overture for the return of the latter to office; but if so, that overture must undoubtedly have been made by Lord Eldon himself, without the knowledge of the head of the government, since it can here be authoritatively stated, that Mr. Addington never once entertained an idea of that nature after the failure of the negotiation with Mr. Pitt in April, 1803. It is necessary also, in this

* This fact is stated in the "Life of Lord Eldon," vol. i. p. 438., and is confirmed by Mr. Abbot's diary for October 29th, 1804, on which day Mr. Addington paid him a visit at Kidbrooke. The entry is as follows:— "Mr. Addington said that in March last the Chancellor had a *tête-à-tête* dinner with Mr. Pitt, of which he acquainted him (Mr. Addington) a month afterwards." It appears from a note of Mr. Pitt to Lord Eldon, dated March 20th, 1804, published in the "Life," that the correspondence between them at that time was commenced by the latter.

place, to correct another mis-statement in the next page but one of the "Life of Lord Eldon," where it is asserted that upon the King's being sufficiently recovered to preside at the privy council on the 23d of April, which was two days before the debate on Mr. Fox's motion, "the attempt to remodel the government seems to have been immediately resumed, through the agency of the Lord Chancellor, on whom alone, in a matter where the personal intervention of Mr. Addington was necessarily out of the question, the King inclined to rely."*

The above statement, as far as it relates to Mr. Addington and the cabinet generally, can be confidently declared, on the best authority, to be altogether erroneous. It represents the "attempt" to have been "resumed" on the 23d; but the Sidmouth papers leave no doubt whatever, that at that moment, and indeed until after the diminished majority of the 25th, Mr. Addington so far from, *even privately*, meditating resignation, was fully resolved to stand his ground; and that it was not until Sunday the 29th, that he declared his intention of resigning, to the members of the cabinet, and to a few of his most intimate friends. Of whatever nature, therefore, the communications between the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt may have been on the 22d and the following day, they were confined to themselves, and remained wholly unknown to his Lordship's principal colleague. The private nature of the transaction, indeed, is distinctly stated in the following extract from Mr. Pitt's note to the Lord

* Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 440.

Chancellor, of the 22d of April: — "I enclose my letter unsealed for your inspection, knowing that you will allow me in so doing to request that *you will not communicate its contents to any one but the King himself.* I am the more anxious that you should see what I have written, because I cannot think of asking you to undertake to be the bearer of a letter expressing sentiments so adverse to the government with which you are acting, without giving you the previous opportunity of knowing in what manner those sentiments are stated." As the letter alluded to above has never, it is believed, been published, the nature of the "*adverse sentiments*" contained in it cannot be ascertained. Mr. Addington, however, told Mr. Abbot in the conversation on the 29th of October already referred to, that the letter which the Chancellor delivered to the King from Mr. Pitt, contained expressions so injurious to him (Mr. Addington), that at the last cabinet meeting, on the night before the new ministry was formed, he very strongly remonstrated with his Lordship on the proceeding.*

Mr. Addington's determination to resign was taken, as has already been observed, after the debate on the 25th, and he made a communication to his Majesty to that effect on the 26th; but it was not until Sunday, the 29th, that the measure of resignation was determined upon in council. Some portion of the interim he must have employed in preparing for the production of his budget, which had been announced

* Mr. Abbot's record of a conversation with Mr. Addington, Oct. 29th, 1804.

for the 30th, and in this object he succeeded so well, as to have acquired the approbation both of his supporters and opponents. Here the narrative again becomes indebted to Mr. Abbot's diary, which, under the date of April 29th, gives the following heads of a conversation held that day with Mr. Addington: —

"The King dreads a defeat of the ministry in parliament as the forerunner of a regency. The preservation of his Majesty's health is the great object at present. He may still, if necessary, effect a change in the ministry without being driven to it by a junction of the three oppositions. Mr. Pitt is not now pledged to any man. But the King is ready to avert this, by the utmost exercise of his authority, if that can, all things considered, succeed; and parliament would be dissolved now if the state of business and public affairs did not preclude that measure. It is now for consideration whether the battle can be fought with a certainty of success; or else the evil would be only aggravated, and passions exasperated. The King is earnest to do for Mr. Addington every thing and more than he can desire, or may choose to accept; but to belong to any new arrangement, Mr. Addington is resolved not to consent."

The above extract entirely refutes the suggestion, that the ministers had any idea of resigning on the 22d; for even on the 29th, after the two unfavourable divisions, Mr. Addington's language, though certainly leaning towards a surrender, did not quite manifest a decided resolution to that effect. On that evening, however, the question was finally settled at a cabinet council; and early on Monday, the 30th, Mr. Pitt was informed by the Chancellor, with Mr. Addington's cognizance, that the latter considered his administration at an end. The narrative will now be continued from Mr. Abbot's diary of April 30th: —

"When Mr. Addington came into the House, he came to me in the chair, and mentioned Lord Hawkesbury having put off the business in the House of Lords. I asked him what this meant? He said it was upon the ground which he had suggested to me yesterday; that the King dreaded his closet being forced: there was no want of zeal, attachment, or fidelity in the support of his present ministers, but a want of confidence in the success of the contest, according to the King's view of the state of affairs: and therefore a communication had been made (not through Mr. Addington) which would, for the present, suspend all proceedings upon contested measures; and I should not see him upon the treasury bench for more than a very few days. He added, that if a division had taken place that evening in the Lords on the Marquis of Stafford's motion on the defence of the country, the majority was not expected to have exceeded ten, and in the Commons the next division was not expected to be more than twenty-two in favour of administration.

"He then went through his budget with great clearness, and apparently with great satisfaction to the House; and not a remark was made upon it by any member. At the close of the resolutions Mr. Fox rose, and, adverting to what had passed in the other House, asked whether the same reasons were applicable to the state of business in that House also; to which Mr. Addington replied, that they certainly were, and that the government did not mean to bring forward at present any controverted measures. The notices and orders of the day were then deferred indefinitely, and the House broke up in a disturbed state, but without any further conversation, or any clamour or apparent exultation. Fox and his friends seemed to be gloomy, and the Grenville party were entirely silent. The Chancellor went to Pitt at eleven on this day, to signify to him the King's pleasure. It was, in fact, taken at the cabinet held late on Sunday night. Mr. Pitt, when he came into the House of Commons (as was also observed when he entered the House of Lords) was evidently much embarrassed. Mr. Fox appeared to have had no previous intimation of the King's message to Mr. Pitt."

Mr. Addington's bringing forward the budget after he had offered his resignation, was a counterpart of what Mr. Pitt had done in 1801. A budget does not harmonise well with the exciting events we are now recording; but, as Mr. Addington's administration of the Treasury was one of the principal points on which he might have chosen to rest his reputation as a Minister, his last financial transactions must on no account be overlooked. The following statement, therefore, is presented from the same authentic source whence those relating to the budgets of the two preceding years were derived: —

The budget of 1804 was brought forward under the unfavourable influence of a falling administration; but the vigorous measures which had marked Mr. Addington's financial operations during the two preceding years enabled him to surmount all the difficulties of his situation. By invigorating the war taxes with an addition of one million, he was enabled to raise no less than 15,440,000*l.* under that head for the service of the year, and at the same time to reduce the amount of the loan to 10,000,000*l.*; and thus to realise his avowed intention of adding little, if any thing, to the permanent charges of the country. The readiness with which the people submitted to so heavy an addition to their burdens was the surest proof of their conviction of the necessity of the war, and of their resolution to make any sacrifice to maintain the honour and security of their country.

Of the above-mentioned sum of 15,440,000*l.*, 8,440,000*l.* were charged on the temporary duties of customs and excise, and 7,000,000*l.* on the property tax.

This latter sum requires a little explanation. The Property Tax Act did not receive the royal assent until the 11th August, 1803; and the complicated arrangements required for its assessment and collection in all parts of Great Britain took up so much time that only 363,000*l.* had been received in the exchequer before the 5th of April, 1804, when the financial year closed, notwithstanding the tax was retrospective from the 5th of April, 1803. This delay occasioned many ominous predictions that the tax would prove a failure, although the tax-office estimate of the actual assessment was 4,700,000*l.* Mr. Addington, therefore, felt fully justified in taking a credit for 7,000,000*l.* on the produce of 1804, including the uncollected arrear of 1803. In 1805 Mr. Pitt raised the rate of the property tax to six and a half per cent., and in 1806 Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox carried it up to ten per cent., being the rate of the old income tax, at which it continued during the remainder of the war, increasing progressively in its produce, till in the year 1815 the sum of 14,972,000*l.* was paid into the exchequer. Mr. Addington's statement was received with entire satisfaction, and Mr. Pitt is known to have privately expressed his approbation of the budget.* Mr. Addington had, therefore, the gratification to close his financial administration in a manner not less honourable to himself than advantageous to the public; having, amidst all the diffi-

* Lord Bexley told the author, that Mr. Charles Long had informed him that Mr. Pitt much approved of Mr. Addington's budget for 1804, and thought him perfectly justified in charging the whole arrear of property tax, *i. e.* the whole sum assessed, but not yet collected.

culties which surrounded him, created a resource, to which his successors were in no small degree indebted for the means of supporting the extraordinary exertions by which they were at last enabled, under the blessing of Divine Providence, to rescue Europe from oppression, and to establish an honourable and lasting peace.

His speech on the budget was the last parliamentary duty which Mr. Addington fulfilled as Prime Minister of England; but he continued to transact the ordinary duties of his office until the 10th of May, when he returned the seals into his Majesty's hands. His feelings and sentiments during that interval are very fully described in the numerous documents submitted to the author. On the first of May he held a conversation with Mr. Abbot, which the latter has recorded. He observed, "that he had formerly taken office, and was now relinquishing it upon one and the same principle"—devotion to his sovereign; "that the ministers had now decided to resign before the last extremity, that the King might have the grace of making a new choice without absolute compulsion, and it was done at a time *when it was hoped Mr. Pitt was yet unpledged.* Mr. Addington distinctly expressed to those who were present, that, notwithstanding the disapprobation that might be felt at the means by which Mr. Pitt had forced his way back again to power, he should wish all his friends who could do it, consistently with their own sense of propriety, not to decline acting under Mr. Pitt's administration." Mr. Addington then added: "There is one thing, I can assure you of—I will not make any professions about my future line of conduct. I will not even tell the King that I shall support his government." The correspondence con-

tains no letter which proceeded from Mr. Addington's own pen at this early period; but there is one which his private secretary, Mr. Newton Barton, addressed to Mr. Henry Addington at Oxford, from which an extract will now be taken: —

"Downing Street, May 1st.

"It will, I am sure, afford the greatest gratification to your heart to know that in this last act, as in his former acts, your father has been guided solely by his sense of duty towards the King, and a most disinterested love of his country; and that as he allayed one great storm by coming into power, so he will have the further pleasure of dispersing another, that would have collected and burst upon us, by his now judging it expedient to retire from his high situation. We may truly say, 'Multis ille bonis flebilis occidet;' and whilst he will himself have a great deal to forgive, he may defy the most bitter of his enemies to maintain that he has need of a similar indulgence. You will be happy to hear that the King's health is so firmly re-established, that he is able to bear with composure the loss of his best friend as Minister; and I need scarcely add to *you*, that your father's equanimity is totally unruffled by this great crisis, in which he is called upon to make sacrifices that to others would be most painful."

A change of ministers, especially when it is not the result of his own decision, must always be a subject of the deepest anxiety to the sovereign; and probably this arduous duty was never performed under more difficult circumstances, or with greater reluctance, than by George III. on this occasion. The various negotiations necessarily occupied several days; during which the following notes of Mr. Addington's personal history and feelings were recorded by Mr. Abbot's friendly pen: —

"*May 2d.* — Saw Mr. Addington, who had walked with the King yesterday an hour and half in his garden. His

Majesty perfectly well, and not to be called an invalid. Mr. Pitt had not yet seen the King: it is not come to that point yet. Mr. Pitt is now supposed to be much more connected with the rest of the Opposition than has yet appeared. Mr. Addington has made up his mind not to enter into any arrangement with Mr. Pitt to take office; neither will he accept from the King either rank or emolument. The King told the Duke —— yesterday, that he hoped after this he should see more of Mr. Addington, instead of less; but Mr. Addington is anxious not to be marked by special royal favour out of office."

"*May 3d.*—This day Mr. Pitt delivered in writing his proposed arrangements for his Majesty's consideration."

"*May 4th.*—It was understood that Mr. Addington was sent for to-day to the Queen's House."

"*May 5th.*—Saw Mr. Addington. After his interview with the King on Tuesday last, he forebore to go to the Queen's House on Wednesday and Thursday; but the King having settled his written answer (to Mr. Pitt) yesterday, Mr. Addington, being sent for, went, and the whole was communicated to him. Mr. Pitt's proposition was general and *very broad* as to parties to be included. The answer tended to a modified arrangement."

"*May 7th.*—Mr. Pitt saw the King this day. His Majesty had informed Mr. Pitt that he had no objection to Mr. Fox's friends having a share in the government; but could not allow of Mr. Fox holding any office which should require his having any direct intercourse with himself. It was said that Mr. Fox's friends had held a meeting at Carlton House, when he had desired them to take their share in the government; but that they had all resolved not to do so. The King astonished Mr. Pitt, at this interview, by his good state of health in all respects. It is a curious fact, stated by Lord St. Helen's, that Mr. Pitt had not seen his Majesty before for three years. * * * It seems now as if Mr. Pitt was willing to take into his arrangement some of the present ministers, in the room of other persons named in his first proposition."

Mr. Abbot has chronicled the 6th of May as a

day on which "nothing was settled respecting the new ministry." The day, in fact, was occupied by the proceedings, of which Mr. Pitt reported the result to his Majesty in the following note, a copy of which was found amongst the Sidmouth papers: —

"May 7th, 1804.

"Mr. Pitt humbly begs leave to acquaint your Majesty, that he finds Lord Grenville and his friends decline forming a part of any arrangement in which Mr. Fox is not included. Mr. Pitt hopes to be enabled, by to-morrow, to submit for your Majesty's consideration the most material parts of such a plan of administration as, under these circumstances, he wishes humbly to propose. In the mean time, there are one or two points on which he is anxious to receive your Majesty's commands in the course of to-day; and he will, therefore, avail himself of your Majesty's gracious permission, by attending at the Queen's House at half-past three, unless your Majesty should be pleased to appoint some other time."

This favourable state of the arrangements was communicated on the same day to parliament by Mr. Rose, who stated that "he was authorised to inform the House that an honourable member had received the personal commands of his Majesty to submit to his consideration an arrangement for a new administration."

On the 8th Mr. Pitt proceeded with his efforts "to form a ministry out of his own personal friends and some of the existing administration;" and in this he so far succeeded as to feel prepared on the day afterwards to receive the seals of office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. This circumstance is gathered from the following most gracious note, in which his Majesty manifested his anxiety to reward the faithful services of his retiring minister.

"Queen's Palace, May 9th, 1804, $\frac{M}{48}$ past six, P. M.

"The King has this instant finished a long but most satisfactory conversation with Mr. Pitt, who will stand forth, though Lord Grenville, Lord Spencer, and Mr. Windham have declined even treating, as Mr. Fox is excluded by the express command of the King to Mr. Pitt. This being the case, the King desires Mr. Addington will attend here at ten to-morrow morning, with the seals of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The King's friendship for Mr. Addington is too deeply graven on his heart to be in the least diminished by any change of situation: his Majesty will order the warrant to be prepared for the creating Mr. Addington Earl of Banbury, Viscount Wallingford, and Baron Reading; and will order the message to be carried by Mr. Yorke to the House of Commons for the usual annuity, having most honourably and ably filled the station of Speaker of the House of Commons. The King will settle such a pension on Mrs. Addington, whose virtue and modesty he admires, as Mr. Addington may choose to propose. * * *

"GEORGE R."

The true dignity of Mr. Addington's character was in nothing more remarkable than in a noble disinterestedness, and an entire freedom from ambition, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. These qualities he displayed on the present occasion, by gratefully but firmly declining, in the following words, the honours and emoluments with which his approving sovereign was desirous of rewarding his services: —

"Downing Street, May 9th, 1804.

"Mr. Addington will not fail to obey your Majesty's commands to-morrow morning, at the hour which your Majesty has been pleased to appoint. He is deeply impressed with the feelings which are due to the fresh proofs which your Majesty has condescended to afford him of your consideration and favour; but he most humbly and earnestly hopes to be forgiven by your Majesty, for declaring that he could not

possibly avail himself of them, without the utter destruction of that comfort and peace of mind which he is fully convinced that it is your Majesty's gracious and benevolent purpose to preserve and promote. Mr. Addington ventures to refer to his past conduct, as a pledge for those sentiments of duty and of faithful attachment to your Majesty, which have ever been uppermost in his mind, and which will continue fixed and unalterable to the latest moment of his life."

Mr. Addington used to tell his friends, that at the interview with which he was honoured on the 10th of May, the King again pressed upon him the acceptance of the peerage and pension in terms which it must have been very difficult for so devoted a subject to resist. "You are a proud man, Mr. Addington, but I am a proud man too; and why should I sleep uneasy on my pillow, because you will not comply with my request? why should I feel the consciousness that I have suffered you to ruin your family, and that through your attachment to me?" *

Many years afterwards Lord Sidmouth detailed these circumstances, in the following letter, to his friend Mr. Hawthorne; who, in consequence of some erroneous observations which had fallen from Mr. Hume in parliament, wrote to his Lordship for accurate information on the subject.

"My dear Sir, Richmond Park, Feb. 15th, 1831.

"I should be wanting in a just sense of your friendly zeal and solicitude, if I did not immediately give you the information you desire. When I was called upon by the King, and earnestly pressed by Mr. Pitt, to take office in the month of

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* Mr. M. Gaskell's Minutes of Conversations.

"All these rewards, as the King told Mr. Addington afterwards, Mr. Pitt had agreed to be perfectly proper."—*Mr. Abbot's Diary.*

January, 1801, his Majesty declared his intention of sending a message to the House of Commons, recommending a provision for my own life, and, upon my death, for that of my son, in consequence of my having held the office of Speaker of the House of Commons during a period of between eleven and twelve years; the pension not to take effect whilst I held any office under the Crown. It was with difficulty that his Majesty was induced to relinquish his intention; as it also was, that some leading members of that House, amongst whom was Sir William Pulteney, were prevented from moving an address to the same effect to the King. On this subject the King frequently expressed great uneasiness, not only to myself but to others; and upon my resignation in 1804, his Majesty informed me, that he had prepared a message to the same effect as that intended in 1801, and declared his intention of sending it immediately to the House of Commons. This I had still greater difficulty in preventing; and similar to it was the difficulty of inducing his Majesty to forego his intention of granting, from himself, a pension to Mrs. Addington. I must add, that, upon my re-union with Mr. Pitt, his first and most anxious wish was to rescue my family from the situation into which they had been thrown by my leaving the chair, and by my acceptance of office in the year 1801; and he accordingly strongly urged me to accept the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for life. This offer was instantly declined. In January, 1822, when in my sixty-fifth year, and when the country was in a state of perfect tranquillity, I requested his late Majesty's (George IV.) permission to retire from office. This request was strongly resisted by his Majesty; and only acceded to upon condition of my remaining a member of the cabinet (a wish in which Lord Liverpool and my other colleagues earnestly joined); and this acquiescence was accompanied by a spontaneous declaration on the part of his Majesty, that he should not be satisfied without bestowing upon me as large a pension as it was in his power to grant; and he was pleased to express great regret, upon being informed by Lord Liverpool that it could not exceed 3000*l.* The power given to the Crown by parliament is limited to the grant of two pensions (existing

at the same time) to persons who have held certain offices for three years; and it was given as a substitute for the power, antecedently possessed, of bestowing certain offices of emolument which were abolished. I did not think that, at the close of my public life, I should have done justice to my family, if I were to decline what his Majesty had so graciously signified his pleasure to grant, under an authority recently conferred by parliament, in the contemplation of its being exercised in reference to services much shorter in duration than those to which, in my instance, it was applied.

"This is the only letter I have ever written on this subject, and it shall be the last; nor have I had any conversation upon it of late, except with two or three friends whose feelings, in consequence of what was said by Mr. Hume in the House of Commons, were similar to your own. I am assured that these feelings are general. I have written in great haste. Your letter did not reach me till my return from town last night. Believe me, my dear Sir, sincerely yours,

"SIDMOUTH.

"P.S. I find, on referring to your letter, that my answer to it will be imperfect, if I do not add, that his Majesty's wishes were communicated to me, on my retirement from office in 1804, in a letter from himself, in which he also declared his intention of conferring upon me an earldom, which was also declined, as was the Garter, twice offered to me by his Majesty.

"To Ch^s. Hawthorne, Esq."

Thus the persevering disinterestedness of the servant overcame the generosity of the monarch; and Mr. Addington respectfully adhered to his determination to accept no rank or emolument, either for himself or his personal connexions. Having, therefore, from a sense of duty to his King and country, relinquished the speakership and the pension, to which his services in that office entitled him, he now retired into private life, with no other reward derived from

the public than the clerkship of the Pells, which he had conferred on his eldest son.

Mr. Pitt received the seals of office from his Majesty on the 10th of May, as soon as Mr. Addington resigned them; and on the same day a new writ was moved for his seat in parliament, which he had vacated by the acceptance of office. Several days, however, still elapsed before the new administration was completed, during which Mr. Addington was occupied by the concluding arrangements of his office. In the fulfilment of this duty, it occasionally became necessary to refer to the King, who failed not on each occasion to introduce into his reply the most gratifying assurances of his favour and approbation. Thus, on the 14th of May, some warrants were returned, after receiving the royal sign manual, accompanied by the following observations: —

"Queen's Palace, May 14th, 1804, $\frac{M}{15}$ past seven, A. M.

"The King has signed and returns the warrants to his truly beloved friend Mr. Addington, whose honour, truth, and personal attachment will ever be a source of the greatest pleasure and comfort his Majesty can enjoy, as he only values those who view him as a man, and not those who reflect alone on the King, consequently are led by interest, not sentiments of friendship. The King will be highly gratified if Mr. Addington will call here at ten this forenoon.

"GEORGE R."

Two days afterwards, Mr. Addington, having concluded his official arrangements, "most humbly laid before his Majesty the last remaining warrants to which he had to entreat the royal signature;" and at the same time "hoped to be permitted to deliver into his Majesty's hand the key of the box in which the

King's communications with his ministers were usually conveyed, with which he had been intrusted during the last three years."

The only favour which, at this time, the King could induce Mr. Addington to accept, was the continued use of the Lodge in Richmond Park, as a residence. This, however, he would only consent to hold during his Majesty's pleasure, and not as a grant; and at the commencement of each succeeding reign he uniformly tendered his resignation of the house, and in every instance was graciously commanded to retain it. On the present occasion his Majesty was so desirous to see Mr. Addington enjoying the tranquillity of that happy retirement, that he laid an injunction upon him on the subject, which gave occasion to the following correspondence: —

Mr. Addington to his Majesty King George III.

"Downing Street, May 22d, 1804.

"In obedience to your Majesty's commands, Mr. Addington humbly acquaints your Majesty, that it is his intention to remove with his family, to-morrow evening, to Richmond Park, where your Majesty has been graciously pleased to express a wish that he should continue to reside. Mr. Addington's unwillingness to intrude upon your Majesty will hardly allow him to express a hope that he may be permitted to wait upon your Majesty in the course of to-morrow, for the purpose of offering to your Majesty, in person, the homage of his duty, gratitude, and affection, before he exchanges a life of occupation and anxiety for one of comparative quiet and retirement."

To the above letter the King was pleased to return the following most gracious reply: —

"May 23d, 1804, Queen's Palace, $\frac{M}{5}$ past seven, A. M.

"The King is ever glad to mark the high esteem and friendship he has for so excellent a man as Mr. Addington, and will be truly gratified in seeing him this morning, at ten o'clock, in his usual morning dress—the King trusts, in boots; as he shall be glad to think Mr. Addington does not abstain from an exercise that is so conducive to his health, and will keep him in readiness, with his Woodley yeomen, to join his Majesty, should Bonaparte or any of his savage followers dare to cross the Channel.

"GEORGE R."

The King's language and demeanour towards Mr. Addington at their parting interview, on the 23d, reflected the highest honour on his heart and feelings. His Majesty expressed undiminished attachment and respect for his retiring minister, and his strong disapproval of the means by which he had been supplanted. At this period, indeed, he did not hesitate to declare, in writing, how much "he lamented that Mr. Pitt should have taken so rooted a dislike to a gentleman who had the greatest claim to approbation from his King and country, for his most able discharge of the duties of Speaker of the House of Commons during twelve years; and for his still more handsomely coming forward to support his King and country when Mr. Pitt and some of his colleagues resigned their employments."

This favourable opinion of Mr. Addington his Majesty had long entertained: as early as 1797 he had said, on meeting the Speaker one morning in the Park, and receiving from him an unsatisfactory reply to his inquiries respecting the debate of the preceding night, "Whatever may happen, there are two persons upon whom I can rely—you, Mr. Speaker, and my-

self." On another occasion, whilst Mr. Addington was minister, the King observed to him — "When I converse with you, I think aloud." And again, in replying to Mr. Bragge's letter of resignation, on the 11th of May, his Majesty further added — "Mr. Addington has the best of hearts, and courage that has saved his King and country." In truth, the perfect candour and integrity of Mr. Addington's character, in which there was not the most distant tendency to guile or double dealing, were exactly adapted to captivate a monarch who said, "he could never think favourably of one whose heart did not take the lead of his understanding." "Give me the man," his Majesty once observed, "who is governed by principle, and not expediency. I always know where to find the one, and never the other."

With such approving sentiments did George III. take leave of his favourite minister, who immediately sought a brief repose from the labours and disappointments of office at Richmond Park, where, on the third day only after his removal, he was cheered by a friendly visit from their Majesties and the royal family. Mr. Addington received, on his retirement, numerous letters expressive of approbation; from amongst which the following has been selected for publication, partly on account of the celebrity of the writer, and still more for the excellence of the sentiments: —

"My dear Sir, Victory, June 30th, 1804.

"Friend I may call thee now, without the suspicion of adulation to a minister; but believe me that my opinion of your honourable abilities as a minister, and your constant friendship for me as a man, have ever held the same place in my heart. I feel pride in avowing it, now you are a private

gentleman. I will not say too much; because when a change takes place, if honourable men are to take the helm, I am sure amongst the foremost will be placed one Henry Addington, whose sincere friend is ever his attached and obliged

"NELSON AND BRONTE.

"I shall see you before Christmas, for I am almost worn out and blind.

"To the Right Hon. Henry Addington."

The light in which Mr. Addington's resignation was regarded upon the Continent may be inferred from the following letter, addressed to him by M. Gentz, a man of great ability and high literary reputation, who was much in the confidence of the continental powers, and had frequently been employed by the court of Vienna in its communications with that of St. James's.*

Copy of a letter from M. Gentz.

"Monsieur, Vienne, le 9 Juin, 1804.

"C'est par un double motif, que je prends la plume pour vous présenter quelques mots, sur le changement qui vient de se faire en Angleterre. * * * Quant à votre situation personnelle, Monsieur, j'espère que vous ne vous attendez de ma part qu'à des félicitations bien sincères sur un évènement, qui, après trois années de travaux immenses, d'efforts constans pour le bien de votre patrie — de peines inséparables d'une aussi vaste administration, et — je suis très-faché de devoir

* M. Gentz subsequently became celebrated as the author of the pamphlet calling upon Germany to resist the encroachments of France upon her liberties, which contributed so greatly to rouse the spirit of Prussia in 1806; and for aiding in the circulation of which, Palm, the bookseller of Nuremberg, was, under the semblance of law, murdered at Brunnau, by order of Napoleon, on the 25th of August, 1806.

ajouter — de dégoûts bien peu mérités, vous rendent enfin à l'indépendance, aux charmes de la vie privée, et à la société de vos amis. Lorsqu'on quitte le timon de l'état avec une conscience aussi libre et aussi pure que la vôtre doit l'être, avec la conviction d'avoir scrupuleusement et noblement rempli la plus grande tâche dont un homme puisse se charger, et surtout avec la satisfaction de remettre, entre les mains de ses successeurs le dépôt de la prospérité publique, non seulement intact, mais plus consolidé et plus affermi qu'on ne l'avait reçu, — il me semble que la retraite doit être un véritable bonheur.

"Mais, en observateur attentif et impartial, de tout ce qui se passe sur la grande scène politique, je regretterai toujours pour le bien public, que si des conjonctures, dont je ne veux pas m'ériger en juge, avaient nécessité un changement, il n'ait pas pu se faire de manière à conserver entre vos mains, une influence directe sur les conseils du Roi.

"Il y a, entr'autres, un point que je dois relever, pour l'honneur de la vérité, tant que pour votre propre satisfaction, Monsieur, et dont, par la situation dans laquelle je me trouve, je suis en état de porter un témoignage irrécusable. On a plus d'une fois accusé le ministère dont vous étiez le chef, de ne pas inspirer assez de considération aux puissances étrangères, et de compromettre par-là les intérêts essentiels de l'Angleterre. Cette accusation, si elle avait une ombre de fondement, ne serait rien moins qu'indifférente, car il est certain que l'Angleterre ne peut jamais, et moins que jamais dans les circonstances actuelles, séparer sa cause de l'intérêt général de l'Europe, sans s'exposer aux plus graves inconvéniens. Mais ayant acquis, peut-être, quelque droit de parler de l'état politique du Continent, j'atteste solemnellement la fausseté de cette assertion si souvent répétée, et si malicieusement dirigée contre vous. Dans les dispositions où se trouvent malheureusement toutes les puissances Continentales, rien, absolument rien ne les aurait engagées, je ne dis pas à un systême d'opposition et de vigueur contre l'ennemi commun, mais seulement au moindre concert, soit entr'elles, soit avec votre gouvernement. Si telle chose eut été possible, je dois attester encore que l'idée, qu'on s'était généralement formée de

votre caractère, de votre droiture, de votre loyauté, de la pureté de vos intentions, et de vos vues reconnues dans toutes les parties de l'Europe, auraient très-efficacement contribué à rapprocher de vous les cours étrangères, à leur inspirer une grande confiance, à les faire entrer sans crainte dans toutes les mesures dictées par un intérêt commun. En disant cela, je suis l'organe de tout ce qu'il y a encore d'hommes éclairés et bien pensans, dans quelque cour du Continent que ce soit : aucun ne contestera mon témoignage.

Agréez avec votre bonté habituelle ce faible hommage de la reconnaissance et du respect, avec lequel je ne cesserai d'être, Monsieur, &c. &c.

"GENTZ."

Mr. Addington's descent having thus been traced from the guidance of a mighty empire into the shade of private life, a few observations will now be submitted on the circumstances that led to his retirement.

As regarded the conduct of the original Opposition, he had no grounds of complaint. It was manly, open and consistent, whilst that of Mr. Erskine, Mr. Sheridan, and some others of the party, was generous and friendly. But it would be wrong to deny, that, not only at the moment, but to the close of his life, Mr. Addington considered he had been unkindly and unfairly opposed by Mr. Pitt. Nor will the existence of this feeling excite surprise when it is remembered, that Mr. Pitt almost obliged his friend to accept the government after he himself had relinquished it *; that, to remove his hesitation, he promised him his

* The extent to which Mr. Pitt conduced towards Mr. Addington's assumption of the government was accurately defined by the latter in the following note to Mr. Le Mesurier's MS. pamphlet : — "Mr. Pitt did not recommend Mr. Addington to office, *but he contributed more than any other man to his acceptance of it :* he pressed many of his own friends to accept or remain in office, and gave him every possible reason to rely on his constant and firm support."

assistance and advice whenever he might request it; that, nevertheless, he removed to a distance where it would be impossible to consult him*; and, finally, overthrew the government by uniting himself with the common opponents of its system and his own, who would have been comparatively powerless but for the assistance he thus afforded them. Mr. Addington felt that his conduct towards Mr. Pitt had not merited such a return. He had consulted him on every occasion on which it was practicable to do so; he had steadily adhered to the course of policy which Mr. Pitt had established; and even had he deviated from that system, he was entitled to expect from Mr. Pitt, in the first instance, not public opposition, but private and friendly representation. If, indeed, Mr. Addington, instead of attending to such advice when offered, had persevered in measures of which Mr. Pitt disapproved, then, and not till then, the latter, under the circumstances, would have been justified in opposing him on the ground of public duty. But it has been already stated in the course of this narrative, that the gradual diminution of confidential intercourse was entirely the result of Mr. Pitt's own conduct. It has been shown, that when he was at Bath, Mr. Addington sent his brother to confer with him; nay more, that

* Mr. Addington placed this point upon its true grounds in conversing with Lord Malmesbury on the 9th of March, 1803. "I wish," he said, "Mr. Pitt would come up; but he is beset; strange stories are told him. * * * His mind, strong as it is, is not proof against this. We *cannot*, nor ought not, for his sake, to keep him minutely and regularly informed when he is at a distance; it would be loading him with responsibility for measures not his own: but, when near, I neither ought nor *can* conceal any thing from him."—*Diary*, vol. iv. p. 227.

when the circumstances of the country became imminent, Mr. Addington declared to him, both in conversation and by writing, that "there should be no obstacle on his part to an arrangement of Mr. Pitt's own suggestion," and that "he had not a wish for any official situation whatever." *

Mr. Pitt, however, would neither be the adviser of the administration nor its head. Nothing would satisfy him but its dissolution; and because Mr. Addington, gladly as he would have given place to Mr. Pitt himself, declined to make way also for those who had opposed his government almost from its commencement, he assumed an attitude, first of disapprobation, and then of decided hostility. Such treatment was rendered doubly distressing to Mr. Addington, from the circumstance that it proceeded from one whom he had so long loved, to whom he owed so many obligations, and towards whom he felt conscious of having ever acted with the utmost fidelity and attachment. This change of conduct in his oldest and dearest friend he always attributed, not to spontaneous feeling, but to extraneous influence. Considerations, however, of that nature could not mitigate the pang which severance from such a friend was calculated to inflict upon a generous mind; and doubtless this separation constituted what he considered one of the principal misfortunes of his whole life.

Painful as it is to dwell upon the failings of any great and eminent character, it would be both improper and useless to withhold the fact, that the party to whom Mr. Addington more particularly attributed

* Mr. Addington's letter to Mr. Pitt, dated April 18th, 1803.

the alienation of Mr. Pitt's friendship and confidence from himself was Mr. Canning*; and this being his conviction, it is not surprising that he should have resented with considerable warmth a line of conduct which had been productive of such painful results. Such, indeed, was the state of feeling which had now arisen between these two statesmen, that for several years they declined to serve together in the same cabinet; and in this position they remained until the summer of 1812, when an accidental meeting occurred between them, at which generosity and mutual good feeling happily prevailed in putting an end to a difference so distressing both to themselves and to their friends. The circumstances attending this reconciliation are so honourable to both parties that it is with much satisfaction they are now presented to the reader, as extracted from Miss Addington's notes of her father's conversations: — "On the 21st of July, 1812, the Count d'Antraigues was murdered by his own servant at his lodgings at Barnes in Surrey; and as he had long been an object of political suspicion to the government, it became Lord Sidmouth's duty as Secretary of State to detain his papers for inspection. A day was accordingly appointed, on which the young Count d'Antraigues was to attend at the Home Office to witness the opening of his father's papers, and at his request, two friends of the deceased person, of high character and distinction, were also invited to be present. The parties thus selected were Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Canning. The latter, arriving

* That he was correct in this impression is now placed beyond the possibility of doubt, by the disclosures made throughout the whole fourth volume of Lord Malmesbury's Diary.

early on the day appointed, instead of being conducted at once into the apartment assigned for the examination of the papers, was, by mistake of the office keeper, ushered into the anteroom to Lord Sidmouth's private apartment. On hearing this circumstance, his Lordship immediately desired Mr. Canning might be shown in, and on his entrance offered him his hand. "Accident," he said, "has brought us together, and I gladly avail myself of the opportunity to say that it surely is not becoming us as gentlemen, not to mention our higher obligation as Christians, to be unable to meet in society without the recurrence of feelings distressing to ourselves and others. For his own part," he added, "he was anxious to declare his readiness to meet Mr. Canning on cordial terms, and that it only rested with *him* to remove all painful impression of the past! Mr. Canning changed colour, and with much emotion took Lord Sidmouth's offered hand, saying, 'My Lord, you have removed a great weight from my mind: I cannot express what I feel!'"

To the above description of what passed on this occasion, as given by *one* of the parties, that of the *other* can now, fortunately, be added. It is contained in a letter, dated "Felpham, February 4th, 1813," addressed by Dr. Cyril Jackson, Dean of Christchurch, to Lord Sidmouth, upon which the latter has endorsed the words, "To be carefully preserved." After a few sentences on a different subject, the letter proceeds as follows:—

"I had two calls from Canning, last year, when he was on a visit to Huskisson, who lives about eight miles from this place. He talked over many things with me, as he generally does, very confidentially; but, generally, they are things

which are past. I get histories, therefore, and I believe, too, in the main (as I judge from comparing them with what I hear through other channels), not unfaithful ones: nor does he spare himself, or refuse to be scolded, as he often is; but then, as I tell him, before he gives me the opportunity of scolding, the mischief is already done.

"We had talked over a certain negotiation, and, of course, had said something of many persons individually, when he observed to me, on the sudden, and with much emotion, 'I must tell you something of Lord Sidmouth, though I know it will lead to a repetition of the scoldings I have often had.' He then mentioned to me the whole of your Lordship's behaviour to him at your own office: 'the whole,' he said, 'was done with complete dignity, complete goodness of heart, and,' he added too, 'in the best possible augury' (an odd expression, but I understand its meaning). 'I never,' he went on, 'was so thoroughly overcome — I do not know how I behaved, and scarcely what I said. Do not do it in form, but if ever you have an opportunity, I would wish Lord S. to know from you that I felt as I ought.' I will not trouble your Lordship with a detail of the conversation which followed. You will easily judge what it was, if I say that it was a comment on some words of my own, of which he himself fairly reminded me, that 'he would one day feel how unworthily you had been treated.'

"For myself, I own that I was glad to see that there was still before me the same man whom I had originally known: not, however, that I am at all sure that some nitrous cloud of politics may not hurry him off, like Milton's Satan, to very strange regions; but, at the moment I am speaking of, there were certainly the 'veræ voces,' and the 'eripitur persona,' of Lucretius.

"I have often thought of saying all this to your Lordship; but I waited for the opportunity of doing it, as he said, without form: * * * and now, after all my wise counsels, I have done the thing as formally and as abruptly as if I had contrived matters on purpose. Yet, any way, I have a pleasure in writing all this to your Lordship. I have always,

through life, liked to be a tale-bearer, if my tale would serve to show any thing of kindness, and generosity, and honour.

* * * * * * *

"I have the honour to be, with the most perfect respect, your Lordship's most obliged and most obedient servant,

"CYR. JACKSON."

He whose unsought duty it has been to trace the progress of an enmity from which such important public consequences resulted, feels no hesitation in publishing a letter which, though private, redounds so much to the credit of all the three parties concerned in it. Freely, indeed, does he participate in the pleasure expressed by the learned Dean, on recording the "honour and generosity" of Mr. Canning's conduct on that occasion. The candid admission here recorded of the "unworthy treatment" which Lord Sidmouth had received required the exercise of mental qualities to which even great men are often found unequal; and although one expression in the letter intimates a doubt as to the permanency of Mr. Canning's present impressions, it is due to him to state, that the Dean was quite mistaken in that respect; and that Lord Sidmouth always described Mr. Canning's subsequent conduct towards himself as that of a man anxious to efface the recollection of past transactions by every mark of cordiality and respect.

The foregoing recital will convey, it is hoped, an useful moral, by adding one to several instances in which Lord Sidmouth's integrity, frankness, equanimity, and composure enabled him to overcome the political, or even personal, disfavour of generous opponents, and to win their respect—occasionally their confidence and friendship. The reader has already

seen instances of this nature in the cases of Messrs. Windham, Erskine, Sheridan, and Canning; those of Mr. Fox, Lord Grenville, Lord Howick, and others, will hereafter be presented to him.

The conduct of the various parties whose combination overthrew Mr. Addington's government having thus been related, a few remarks on the circumstances of that statesman's retirement from office shall conclude the present chapter. The inadequacy of his preparations against invasion constituted the only *ostensible* grounds of opposition to his administration; whilst the *real* cause was the withdrawing of Mr. Pitt's confidence, which carried with it that of a large and influential portion of the members of both Houses. This powerful body, followers successively of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington, were necessarily placed in great difficulties by the rupture between their leaders; and many of them who, from ancient recollections, the magic of his eloquence, or the lustre of his long administration, really preferred Mr. Pitt, immediately sought some pretext for withholding their further support from Mr. Addington. The question of the preparations exactly afforded the pretext required, and hence it was adroitly selected as the point of attack. Where the danger was so imminent, and the stake so immense, it was easy to work upon men's feelings, and render them timid, suspicious, and dissatisfied. The prominent objection, then, to Mr. Addington's measures was merely a political expedient; and those parliamentary supporters who deserted him at the close of his ministry did so, probably, not from disapproval of his measures, still

less from any real defects in them; but from the superior confidence and attachment which they reposed in Mr. Pitt. There was, in truth, no deficiency in the means which Mr. Addington had provided for the defence of the country. On the contrary, never had any previous minister so fully called forth its energies — never had the population so eagerly responded to such a call. A reference to the returns given at the foot of this page* will satisfactorily prove the truth of this

* The following statements of the strength of the army, &c. &c. at different periods during, or about the time of, Mr. Addington's administration, is taken from the official returns of the Adjutant General, published by Mr. Hawthorne in 1808, as a pamphlet, under the title of "Statements relating to the Measures adopted during the present War for the Augmentation of the Military Force of the Country."

The effective strength of the army at home, *i.e.* in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands, including regulars (artillery, cavalry, and infantry,) and militia, was as follows:—

January 1st, 1803 - - - -	51,788
July 1st, 1803 (after war was declared) -	117,748
January 1st, 1804 - - - -	183,693
July 1st, 1804 (the strength at the time of Mr. Addington's resignation) - -	191,367

The number of volunteers and yeomanry enrolled within the United Kingdom in December, 1803, was —

In Great Britain - - - -	380,193
In Ireland - - - - -	82,941
Total - - -	463,134

Of this number, at the date of Mr. Addington's resignation, all but about 15,000 were supplied with muskets, the remainder being armed with pikes.

assertion. The same fact is shown in the inferiority of Mr. Pitt's subsequent plans for increasing the effective strength of the army, compared with those pursued by Mr. Addington. The testimony, however, which appears decisive on the question is that of Lord Howick, an opponent of Mr. Addington's administration; who, nevertheless, observed, when speaking upon the army estimates, on the 21st of January, 1807, that Lord Sidmouth's military measures were the only ones which had hitherto produced any speedy or large augmentation of our army.* Were further evidence

Number of men bearing arms in Great Britain and Ireland at the period of Mr. Addington's resignation -	654,501
Number of men raised for the regulars and militia at home between March, 1803, and March, 1804 -	132,603
Number of men raised for the regular army at home between July, 1803, and July, 1804 - - -	46,681
Number of effective men raised for the army of reserve up to May 24th, 1804 - - - -	37,290
Number wanting to complete the army of reserve -	12,710
The number of men who volunteered from that army for general service - - - - -	19,553
The number of men added to the army for general service by new levies between May, 1804, and May, 1805, *i.e.* during the first year after Mr. Pitt's return to office - - - - - -	5,158

N.B. All the above returns relate only to Great Britain and Ireland, and not at all to the colonies or foreign dependencies of Great Britain.

* "The noble Lord" (Castlereagh), he stated, "had dwelt much in complimentary observations on the Addington administration, of which he had been a member. Certainly it did make considerable additions to the effective force, and its measures had a much more beneficial operation than he had expected. Thus much it was fair to state. It would be seen by the accounts, that in January, 1803, about 95,000 men was the amount of the

required, that of the enemy might be cited, who, notwithstanding his boastings, admitted the efficiency of Mr. Addington's preparations, by altogether declining to encounter them. It is needless, however, further to investigate a subject which does not admit of actual demonstration. A few words, therefore, will be bestowed instead on Mr. Addington's foreign policy, so approvingly mentioned in M. Gentz's letter.

The following statement, then, of the principles upon which Mr. Addington's administration acted with respect to continental alliances, is derived partly

public force. On the 1st of July, 1804, it consisted of 230,759, and 6000 artillery, being an augmentation of 140,000 men. No doubt could be entertained that the Army of Reserve Act, as well as the regulations of the militia, were calculated to raise a large additional force."—*Debate on the army estimate*, Jan. 21st, 1807.

The above candid admission on the part of one who assisted to displace Mr. Addington's government on the grounds of the inefficiency of their military preparations, whilst it reflects honour upon the speaker, constitutes a full justification of Mr. Addington's measures.

In a letter which Lord Sidmouth addressed to Mr. Bathurst on the 23d January, 1807, he expressed much satisfaction at "the kind and honourable conduct of Lord Howick, and regretted that his speech should have been rendered in a great degree unavailing by the defective manner in which it had been reported in the journals."

In the same debate, Mr. Windham admitted that Mr. Addington's Army of Reserve Act had certainly proved "the best of all the temporary measures proposed, having produced a considerable supply to the army, amounting to 40,000 men. It had succeeded," he added, "infinitely better than Mr. Pitt's subsequent measure, the Additional Force Act, which he pronounced a total failure; for if, from the addition Mr. Pitt had made to the army in the last two years, a deduction were made of the men who entered from the army of reserve, and from the militia, the actual increase would be very small indeed," — as Lord Howick afterwards stated, "only 707 men."

from Mr. Le Mesurier's manuscript pamphlet before alluded to, and Lord Sidmouth's marginal remarks upon it, and partly from the author's own notes and recollections of several conversations with his Lordship on the subject.

Having succeeded to an extent which no subsequent government could equal, still less surpass, in rendering the country impregnable to foreign enemies, and having also availed himself of Russia's dissatisfaction at the conduct of the French Consul, to establish a perfect understanding with that power, and with Austria, our constant ally, Mr. Addington considered it to be the policy of Great Britain to remain in her present attitude of preparation and defiance, without exciting hostilities on the Continent. By this course she would at once husband her resources for the period when they might be applied with the best prospect of success, enable the continental powers to recruit their strength for another effort, and oblige the enemy to remain in the false position in which his pledge to invade England had placed him—a position from which *he could not advance without imminent danger, nor recede without certain disgrace.* Whilst every day was adding to the extent and efficiency of the British military preparations, and rendering it more difficult for France to attempt to execute her threat, it was evident to Mr. Addington that a premature continental war would afford Bonaparte the best possible pretext for extricating himself from this dilemma; that it would save him from the alternative of either disgracefully abandoning, or rashly attempting, an enterprise all but hopeless; that it would withdraw

his armies from a service to which they were unused, and re-open for them the precise career for which they were best adapted. True it was, that the fear of invasion would thus at once be dissipated; but this object would be purchased at too high a cost. Mr. Addington indeed knew from Count Stahremberg that Austria would come forward at his call; but he knew also that she was wholly unprepared. "We are a giant," was the Count's expression to him, "but a giant exhausted; and we require time to regain our strength."

Under these circumstances Mr. Addington deemed it greatly preferable to continue the war single-handed for a time, than, as Mr. Pitt called it, "to rouse Austria" before she was fully prepared for the contest.

He was aware also of the prejudice against England, as if she were the exciter of war upon the Continent for her own private advantage. He deemed it therefore important, that, whenever hostilities should be renewed generally, the continental powers should feel it to be their own quarrel, and should be the principals in their own cause; and with this view, all he did was to maintain the most friendly relations with them, and show every disposition to furnish assistance, but at the same time to advise them to no step which they did not themselves consider essential.

Had Mr. Pitt, pursuing the system of his predecessor, been content to remain in this state of armed and watchful repose, or had confined his attacks on the enemy to those distant points where alone he was vulnerable, one of two things must have ensued. Bonaparte must have executed his menace at a risk which

neither he nor his army would willingly have encountered, or he must have incurred the discredit of abandoning his project altogether. Unfortunately a different course was pursued, by which the French were relieved from their awkward dilemma, and instead of an element on which they had always been beaten, were presented with that exact theatre of war which, of all others, they would have preferred. Russia was persuaded to march, and Austria was hurried into a war, for which she was not prepared; thus the withdrawing the army from Boulogne became a measure to which Napoleon could resort without discredit; and the rivetting the chains of the Continent more deeply than ever at Ulm and at Austerlitz was the necessary result. This series of misfortunes was attributed by Mr. Addington chiefly to the *manner* in which Mr. Pitt had opposed the late administration, and placed himself at the head of the government. He had imputed to his predecessor the inadequacy of his naval and military preparations, and his having taken no care to secure the country by continental alliances. Having, therefore, supplanted him on these grounds, a totally different policy on his own part appeared essential to his continuance in power; and he acted as if he felt deeply pledged to show an increase of vigour by sea and land, and to make foreign nations contribute to the defence of this country. But whatever may have been the inducement to this line of policy, the result undoubtedly was most disastrous; and Mr. Addington, if he had not previously been confident of the superiority of his own system of conducting the war, must soon

have painfully ascertained it, by observing the total and calamitous failure of that of his successor.*

* Having read, as his duty required, all the published accounts of Mr. Addington's administration to which he could obtain access, and carefully compared them with official documents and authentic papers in his own possession, the author could not help being struck with the frequent inaccuracy both of the statements themselves and of the reasoning contained in them. There is, however, one honourable exception—the account given by the late lamented Mr. Adolphus, who has represented the transactions in question with fidelity and ability, and has rendered that justice to Mr. Addington's motives, character, and services which contemporary history had denied to him. Of a totally opposite character, the author regrets to observe, is the account given of the last five years of Mr. Pitt's life by his own biographer. The numerous misrepresentations therein made, both of Mr. Addington's conduct and sentiments, have, for the most part, it is hoped, been corrected in this work. When the "Life of Pitt" first appeared, in the winter of 1809, Lord Sidmouth and his friends were quite indignant at the mis-statements contained in it. The former, in writing to Mr. Bathurst on the 8th of January, 1810, observed, "Mr. Gifford's work has at last appeared. It consists of three quarto volumes, containing in the whole 2000 pages, of which 160 only are allotted to the transactions of the years 1801—1805, *and these are full charged with falsehood and scurrility, which shall not pass unnoticed.*"

CHAPTER XXIV.

1804, 1805.

Mr. Addington's Delight on escaping from Office — His Conduct in Retirement. The Sentiments of his Friends and the Country on that Event. His moderate and dignified Policy in Parliament. Debates on Mr. Pitt's Additional Force Bill. Mr. Sheridan's Speech. Mr. Addington's Sentiments on the Measure, which is carried. Mr. Addington's Sentiments on the Slave Trade Abolition Bill. His Tour into the West. He removes his Family to Worthing. The King's Present of his Majesty's Portrait. Letter from his Majesty. Letter from Lord de Dunstanville on Mr. Pitt's Measures. Mr. Addington's Visit to the Speaker. Lord Hawkesbury attempts a Reconciliation between him and Mr. Pitt. Overture from the latter. Resumption of Intercourse between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington. Letter on the Subject from the King. Mr. Addington accepts a Peerage and the Presidency of the Council — Receives the Congratulations of his Friends. The Author's Remarks. Mr. Addington admitted to the King's Dinner. He resigns his Seat for Devizes — Is created Viscount Sidmouth. His returning Intimacy with Mr. Pitt. Debates on Mr. Pitt's Additional Force Bill. Mr. Sheridan's Attack on Mr. Pitt. Lord Sidmouth's Reply to the Duke of Clarence. Mr. Whitbread's Motion on the 10th Report of Commissioners of Naval Inquiry. Extracts from Mr. Abbot's Diary; Lord Sidmouth disapproves of the Appointment of Sir Charles Middleton to the Admiralty. Corresponds with Mr. Pitt on the Subject. Wishes to resign, but is induced by Lord Hawkesbury to remain in the Cabinet. His explanatory Letter to his Brother.

The importance of the station from which Mr. Addington had now descended, and the momentous

period during which he had exercised its duties, have occasioned a considerable demand on the reader's time and attention. In requital for this, the shortest possible route will now be pursued in tracing the late minister's personal history during the few months he was permitted to pass in retirement. No man ever resigned power with more satisfaction than he did. His emancipation would have been a source of unmixed delight to him, if, as he stated to his friend Pole Carew, "his health had not been somewhat affected, and his mind thrown too much, perhaps, off its bias, by the nature of the opposition he had experienced, and the quarter, especially, whence it proceeded." Notwithstanding that circumstance, however, the letters of this period describe him as enjoying his liberty, like a youth just released from academic restraint. "I avoided writing to you," observed his friend Bond, "till my letter should find you in the pure air of Richmond Park. Let me now congratulate you upon your deliverance from Downing Street. How few have escaped from that house, as you have, pure as they entered it! Are you not rejoicing in the air, the verdure, and the sound of birds, like a man recovered from a fever?" With such feelings he resumed those social and domestic enjoyments from which he had long been partially debarred; and doubtless it must have added not a little to his gratification to find himself, as Mr. Heneage Legge assured him, "daily rising in public esteem; whilst many men were already beginning to wonder why they were dissatisfied under his administration." In Ireland he appears never to have lost ground at all. This, at least, was the opinion of Lord Redesdale,

who remarked, on the 16th of May, "I will venture to say that your administration was generally popular here; and there was a strong sensation when the necessity for your retiring became obvious." Mr. Pitt, meanwhile, constructed his government from amongst his own personal friends and the members of the late administration, some of whom, however, including Lord Bathurst and Mr. Vansittart, declined to take office after the late minister's retirement. The course which Mr. Addington pursued in parliament in his new position was loyal and dignified. A letter has been preserved, strongly urging upon him the policy which two years afterwards he pursued, of "returning to the discharge of his duty to the King and this great country, united with the Grenvilles and Foxites." Other counsels were offered by persons who, as he observed to his brother, "knew nothing of the motives by which he was actuated, and ascribed to political power a species and degree of attraction which, in his estimation at least, it certainly did not possess. I shall keep aloof," he proceeds, "from all parties, adhere to the King, and take a course that I can conscientiously justify to myself." The period of his retirement is indicated in his papers, by the immediate resumption of the correspondence with his friends. To one of them, Lord Redesdale, who had expressed his regret "that so much of ill humour should remain between him and Mr. Pitt," he replied as follows: — "To your last letter I can only answer, that I have never suffered, nor will I suffer, personal feelings to stand in the way of public duty. Whether or no I have shown ill humour, I would leave, not only to any impartial man, but to the most prejudiced

disciple of ——— to determine. My conduct must speak for itself. I trust it has ever been open, direct, and consistent, and that it will invariably continue so. With party I have no connexion: I shall adhere to the King, and pursue such a course as I can conscientiously justify to myself." With these views, after receiving a most kind and approving address from his constituents at Devizes, he resumed his attendance in parliament, when Mr. Pitt produced his bill for the defence of the country, on the 5th of June.

That minister, to use the words of the Marquis of Stafford in the House of Lords, "had of late directed his attention in a particular manner to the defence of the country against the gigantic efforts of the enemy, and might truly be called a 'giant refreshed.'" Under such circumstances a vigorous and comprehensive measure was universally expected from him, especially after the unqualified censure he had lavished upon the plans of his predecessor. Great, therefore, was the disappointment when it appeared that his Additional Force Bill contained little more than the same provisions which he had so strongly condemned when recommended by others, and that its only novelties consisted in the very questionable policy of reducing the militia, and in obliging parishes to raise recruits — thereby making the parochial authorities do the business of the military department of the kingdom, and throwing the burden and expense of recruiting the army upon the landed interest, to the exemption of the merchants, manufacturers, and stockholders. This provision of the bill Mr. Addington compared, on the first night it was discussed, to the

"*quota* act of the preceding war, which caused a very large expense, without producing any real advantage;" and Lord Henry Petty subsequently expressed his concurrence in the justice of this remark. The bill was very coldly received by the public, and strongly opposed in the House, where there were several divisions upon it, in one of which Mr. Pitt's majority was only twenty-nine — *a smaller number by eight than that upon which his predecessor had gone out.* Mr. Addington's own course in these proceedings was temperate and judicious. He opposed the bill, indeed, because he was convinced, as he told Mr. Yorke on the 13th of June, "that it would be found both feeble and vexatious, and would stand in the way of other measures, less partial and harassing, and more effectual;" but he manifested no traces of "systematic opposition." Of this, however, in the debate on the 18th of June, he was accused by Mr. Canning, who thereby brought down upon Mr. Pitt — the object of his eulogies — the following severe observations from Mr. Sheridan: — "Some part of the administration of the right honourable gentleman, Mr. Addington, I most cordially approved; and his intentions in every instance I respected, because I firmly believed them to be pure and honourable. I thought I saw in many prominent features of his administration a regard for the rights and feelings of the community, and an attachment to the constitution of the country. I now say of that right honourable gentleman's ministerial career, that his entering into office was a sacrifice; his going out a triumph. But did Mr. Canning mean it as a compliment to the right honourable gentleman, that upon his retirement from office he started into

an open, manly, and systematic opposition, or did he mean it as an indirect sarcasm upon the conduct of his friend, Mr. Pitt? When Mr. Addington went out of office he gave no insidious promises of support. He did not take his seat immediately behind his successor, professing and pretending to protect him, by all the aids of his talents and influence, and deserting him when his aid was most wanted. He did not, when direct accusations, and threatened impeachments, and every other mode of determined opposition was employed against him, come down to the House, and offer him the shabby shelter of the previous question, which, to have agreed to, would have conferred eternal disgrace on those who composed the leading part of the late administration."

The debate, of which the above extract formed a part, was thus commented upon by Mr. Addington, in a letter to his brother dated on the 20th of June: —"You will have read the account of what passed on Monday night with mixed feelings of satisfaction and disgust; the former particularly excited by the speeches of Sheridan and Bathurst, in answer to Canning, the latter by those of persons whom I forbear to name. H———y and C——— cannot, I think, remain in office together. My friends have been zealous to the greatest degree, and inflexible. Fox was less powerful than usual, though he succeeded better than Pitt in managing topics which ought not to have been brought forward at all."

The bill finally passed through parliament, but its results fully verified Mr. Le Mesurier's prediction, "that Mr. Pitt could not have chosen a measure more destructive to his reputation and influence, or which

would more effectually expose the weakness of the grounds upon which he opposed the late administration." This was the only question during the remainder of the session in which Mr. Addington offered any active opposition to the measures of his predecessor and successor.

On the 27th of June, upon the third reading of Mr. Wilberforce's bill for the abolition of the slave trade, Mr. Addington briefly expressed his apprehensions, that "the condition of the blacks would be rendered yet more lamentable by the operation of this bill. He was a warm advocate for the abolition of the slave trade; and had the motion been for the consideration of the most effectual means to abolish it, and not for the bill in its present form, it would have received his cordial support. It was well known that he had given notice of a proposition for this express purpose; but the political changes which immediately followed had prevented its introduction into that House."

Mr. Addington alluded to this subject in writing to his brother on the following day: — "Last night the bill for *perpetuating* the African slave trade was read a third time. I spoke very shortly, and made Wilberforce angry. He said enough to justify me in being so," and I restrained myself with some difficulty. * The only remaining discussion which Mr.

* It is to be lamented that Mr. Wilberforce's warmth did not wholly evaporate in the House, but that he vented the remaining portion of it in "angry remarks" in his journal. Mr. Wilberforce was displeased at Mr. Addington's calling himself "an advocate for abolition" at the same time that he opposed his bill. Mr. Addington was an advocate for the immediate regulation and amelioration of the trade, and for its subsequent gradual abolition;

Addington "thought it necessary to attend" was that on the motion for discharging the arrears of the civil list, which took place on the 2d of July. On that occasion he expressed his full approbation of the proposition made by Mr. Pitt; and explained, that no part of the arrear was expended for secret service. Shortly afterwards, he retired to Richmond Park; and on the 23d of July, accompanied by his eldest son, he commenced a tour into the west of England, paying numerous visits in the course of his progress. His expedition lasted above a month, during which he manifested exuberant spirits, and was welcomed in all the places he visited, with ringing of bells, and other marks of well-earned popularity. On the 26th of August he returned to Richmond Park, and two days afterwards removed his whole family to Worthing, where, as he informed Mr. Bragge, who had just succeeded to the name of Bathurst and the family estate of Lydney in Gloucestershire, "they were comfortably settled on the 4th of September." On the 24th he told his brother, "he went to Brighton, in consequence of a summons to dine at the Pavilion. Nothing very particular occurred. Lord Limerick, Sir James Pulteney, Tierney, and Adams, were of the party.

but he always considered that Mr. Wilberforce's propositions were of too vague, crude, and violent a character to effect any object except that of driving the trade out of the regular course, where it might be controlled and humanised by parliament, into clandestine, and, therefore, still more objectionable, channels. It was under this impression that he once told Mr. Wilberforce that his bill should be entitled "A Bill for increasing the Atrocities of the African Slave Trade, and perpetuating its Duration." The further consideration of this question is reserved for the time when the Act of Abolition was carried by the government of which Mr. Addington was a member.

The *Emperor*," he added, "has at last discovered that his flotilla can of itself do little or nothing, and the naval strength of Spain will accordingly soon be added to that of France and Holland. I shall always reflect with satisfaction on what has been called our temporising policy towards that country."

On the 30th of September he returned to Richmond Park, where, as he wrote to Mr. Bathurst, he "found a copy of Beechy's portrait of his Majesty on horseback, which was to be placed over the mantelpiece in the drawing-room, and was to be followed by two others of the King and Queen in their robes." This considerate mark of his gracious sovereign's favour and approbation he immediately acknowledged in the following grateful terms: —

"White Lodge, September 30th, 1804.

"Upon his return to Richmond Park, after an absence of several weeks, Mr. Addington had the happiness of finding the picture which had been brought to the White Lodge by your Majesty's commands. He will not presume to intrude further upon your Majesty, than to express, with all humility, his very earnest hope that he may have credit with your Majesty for being fully impressed with the feelings which ought to be excited in his mind by this distinguished and, to him, most valuable instance of your Majesty's gracious remembrance and favour."

To this note of acknowledgement the following most gratifying reply was soon afterwards returned: —

"King's Lodge, October 8th, 1804.

"The King received, on Thursday, Mr. Addington's account of having found, on returning from Worthing, the picture his Majesty had directed to be prepared for him. The same young artist is now employed in copying whole-length

portraits of the King and Queen*, to be also placed in the large drawing-room, at the White Lodge, Richmond Park; the former in the robe of honour worn in parliament when the King used, at the close of the session, to be gratified by hearing a most able and summary account of the proceedings of the House of Commons from the most honest and correct Speaker that House ever had chosen, and whom the King will ever look upon as a most affectionate friend, as well as one truly sound in his religious, moral, and constitutional principles.

"GEORGE R."

All the letters which Mr. Addington received during this period represented the feebleness and inutility of the measures which Mr. Pitt had substituted for those of his predecessor. "You know," wrote Lord de Dunstanville from Cornwall, in October, "my general good wishes to Mr. Pitt. My opinion of him, however, has been much shaken by his treatment of you. I am sure the events of the last summer must have convinced all impartial men, that there was no foundation for any of the charges against the administration. I am fully convinced you stand on vantage ground. Every effective measure of the present ministers has been formed on your plans: their own have completely failed. Similar sentiments were expressed by Sir James Graham of Netherby, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Pole Carew, Mr. Blackburne, and others. They all notice the extraordinary productiveness of the taxes laid on by the late government, which enabled Mr. Pitt to postpone the meeting of parliament to the middle of January, Mr. Pitt's extravagance in purchasing merchant ves-

* These portraits his Lordship devised to the eldest son of his old valued friend the Earl of Powis, and they contribute to ornament the walls of Powis Castle.

sels, which were not required, and the total failure of his Additional Force Act, under which they could not discover that a single man had been raised.

On these topics Mr. Addington expressed himself as follows, in his reply to Mr. Pole Carew, on the 22d of October:—"The war taxes have been very productive, and the provision made last session (let me add, by the last government) has been found sufficient to cover, not only the services which we had in contemplation, but the increased charges which were deemed necessary by Mr. Pitt. Of these, a large proportion has been incurred in purchasing vessels, not the best calculated for service, which cannot be rendered available, except by withholding from King's ships which are ready, and others which are coming forward, the means of enabling them to go to sea. As to the recruiting bill, it has failed completely and universally as a military measure, and it has no other effect than that of charging houses and land with a heavy and (I must say) a most unjust penalty."

On the 29th of October Mr. Addington paid a visit of two days to his friend the Speaker, whose indefatigable pen has recorded the following summary of the conversations which took place on that occasion:—

"*October 29th.*—Mr. Addington came to Kidbrooke, and left us on the 30th. His future line of conduct will be that of frequent, but not constant, attendance in parliament; to deliver his sentiments fairly upon the measures of government; but with a wish to be able to support them, for the King's comfort and the public service, which he considers at this time identified; and to disclaim all appearance of making or keeping together any party of his own."

The journal, after recapitulating the observations which have already been extracted from Mr. Adding-

ton's letter to Mr. Carew; and stating that Mr. Pitt, in August last, had offered Tierney the place of Chief Secretary in Ireland, who declined it for temporary reasons; then proceeds as follows: —

"I reminded Mr. Addington of my former advice to accept the peerage, &c. &c., but, under present circumstances, entirely concurred with him in thinking the line he proposed to be the best."

The diary mentions several other topics, as discussed between the friends, which, to avoid repetition, are now omitted, and concludes the subject with this sentence: —

"Considering himself as the party injured, Mr. Addington said, he could not in honour, or with any utility, make any approaches to a reconciliation with Mr. Pitt; but that a single expression of genuine kindness and sense of justice towards him would be fully sufficient to renew with him the sentiment of early friendship, although it could never be again what it had been."

Similar traces of reviving affection are observable in the correspondence which Mr. Addington maintained with his brother, during the autumn. The earlier indications, indeed, were very faint, as the subjoined specimen, taken from a note of the 6th of October, sufficiently proves: — "A certain person has, I really believe, been occasionally led by his own feelings, and by the management of others, to fancy that he has had causes of complaint; but I am confident he has long known, that there is no pretext whatever for any such impression, and that no such sentiment now exists in his mind. All the misery which has arisen is to be traced to the 'dominandi cupiditas, cui etiam amici postponuntur.'" The feeling here expressed had considerably subsided by the 1st of

November, when, writing to the same party from Richmond Park, Mr. Addington explained his intended line of conduct in the following terms:—

"My determination is to remain quiet and aloof, except upon occasions when I feel it to be a positive duty to the public or to myself to take a part; to keep clear of all parties; and avoid the reality, and, as far as possible, even the appearance of cabal. I will not be the stalking-horse of Opposition: my course seems clear before me. * * * Sheridan, Erskine, Tierney, and Vansittart dined here on Thursday. Tierney went away before ten. Sheridan was cordial and entertaining to the highest degree. I should tell you that Lord and Lady Castlereagh called here yesterday, and stayed half an hour. Hawkesbury and I have interchanged visits, and I have had a very friendly note from him. These particulars will not to you be *uninteresting or unimportant.*"

Certainly they were not, for they indicated the commencement of Lord Hawkesbury's friendly endeavours, which soon afterwards succeeded, to effect a reconciliation. Mr. Addington thus pursued this subject seven days afterwards, when writing to Mr. Bond: —

"A wish is entertained by many respectable persons, and particularly in the highest quarter, that a reconciliation, as it is termed, should take place between Mr. Pitt and myself. How this can be effected, I fairly own that I am unable to imagine. * * *

"My view of public affairs is very gloomy. It seems to me that there is a growing ill-humour and distrust in the country. The government, though strong in connexions, has no hold whatever on the opinion or affection of the people. Great Britain, however, is a good sea-boat, and we must never despair of her."

A letter which Mr. Addington addressed to his brother on the 24th of November thus notices the progress of Lord Hawkesbury's good work: — "On Saturday we are to dine with Lord and Lady H. It

will be the first meeting of the sort since the change. Some circumstances, rather pleasant to my feelings, but which cannot be particularised by letter, have occurred within the last two or three days."

In another letter to the same party, dated the 3d of December, Mr. Addington expressed himself rather less mysteriously. After alluding to an offer of the judge-advocacy to Mr. Bond, and some other attempts to connect his personal friends with the administration, he observed: —

"In the midst of this flirtation, considerable efforts have been made to bring about the confederacy which was unsuccessfully attempted in May.* These efforts have failed: that they have, I rejoice. But, on the other hand, I grieve that the hopes raised by a late interview † (though it seemed to give facility to such a project) have failed too; and, to use the expression of a party concerned, every thing is more *embrouillé* than ever. * * * The complete failure of the recruiting bill is confessed; and I am assured that our military force is less than it would have been if that bill had not passed: I mean that the vacancies in the militia are more numerous than the men raised by the bill. So much for the promised augmentation of the army; and as to its promised exertions, and all that was said of offensive operations, we have now reached the end of the campaign without a single instance of success against the enemy in any part of the world, except the taking of Surinam, which was planned and executed by the late government."

At length, on the 12th of December, the mystery was solved by Mr. Pitt, who, with the previous sanction of the King, sent Lord Hawkesbury to Mr. Addington with overtures, which the latter immediately described to Mr. Bragge Bathurst in the following letter: —

* With the Grenville party.

† Between himself and Lord Hawkesbury.

"My dear Charles, Richmond Park, Dec. 12th, 1804.

"I have this day received a communication from Mr. Pitt, the amount of which is a wish (prompted, as has been stated, by his feelings, as well as by a regard to public interests) that our past differences may be laid aside, and that our connexions of friendship and of political co-operation should be renewed. Lord Hawkesbury was the channel through which the communication was made; and, I trust, he is fully satisfied with the manner in which it was received. The King's name was made use of, by his Majesty's authority; and I was informed that it was his Majesty's earnest wish that former friendship should be restored, and that I might be induced to form a part of his government; and it was also stated, that in this wish his Majesty's confidential advisers entirely concurred. It was added, that there were four persons—yourself, Bond, Vansittart, and Hiley—whom it was concluded I should expect to see included in any arrangement of which I was to form a part, and that for them suitable situations would be found with as little delay as possible. To these, Hobhouse was added; and I felt it incumbent upon me to make an absolute point of satisfying Lord St. Vincent and Lord Buckinghamshire. The former is justly entitled to any professional situation which he could be induced to take, and a cabinet office is what alone could meet the fair pretensious of the latter.* The chief difficulty applies to myself: I should be better satisfied, on many accounts, in declining office altogether. It is, however, conceived to be essential, not only that I should take office, but that the former plan should be adopted of my going to the House of Peers. To this my repugnance is so strong, that nothing would conquer it but a perfect conviction that the King's service would suffer by my adhering to it; and this, as well as two or three other subordinate points, is left *ad referendum.* It seems that the hopes

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* "At the close of the conversation, Mr. Addington stated that there were two other persons, Mr. Yorke and Mr. Steele, whom it was necessary to mention, although they were entitled to consider themselves older friends to Mr. Pitt than to himself."—*Mr. Abbot's Diary.*

which had been entertained, in consequence of the interviews at Kew and Windsor, are entirely at an end; that the connexion between Lord Grenville and Fox is confirmed and consolidated; and that it is become indispensably necessary to congregate, without delay, into a firm and active body, all those whose general principles are the same, and who are zealously disposed to protect the prerogative and to promote the personal comfort of the King. The reflections which occur to my mind upon this occasion are not suited to a letter, but I could not forbear making you acquainted with the circumstances I have stated with as little delay as possible. * * * I can only add our united love, and that I am, my dear Charles, Your affectionate

"HENRY ADDINGTON."*

Such were the subjects of the conference which took place between Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Addington on the 12th of December. Another conversation occurred on the 14th, when the same topics were probably discussed; for on that evening Lord Hawkesbury informed Mr. Addington by note that "since they met in the morning he had again conversed with Mr. Pitt respecting Lord Buckinghamshire, and that Mr. Pitt had desired him to say, that he had the highest opinion of his Lordship, and the most favourable disposition towards him; but that there was no cabinet office at present vacant, and that as the country was

* "The first step in the matter was taken by Mr. Pitt in a letter to the King towards the approach of the session, observing that he had thought it his duty to consider the state of politics with a view to the support of his Majesty's government, and submitting that an official situation should be offered to Mr. Addington; after which Lord Hawkesbury, by Pitt's desire, under the King's approbation, wrote to Mr. Addington to request a meeting on the subject, and accordingly a meeting took place on the 12th of December."—*Mr. Abbot's Minutes of Conversation with Mr. Addington.*

situated, he should not be justified in holding out any certain expectation, which might prevent his making such arrangements, in case of a vacancy, as the circumstances of the moment may render necessary for strengthening the King's government. But that there was no person to whom he would be inclined to give a preference over Lord Buckinghamshire."

Mr. Addington had engaged to meet his brother at Bath on the 17th, and the importance of the conjuncture induced him to summon Mr. Bathurst and Mr. Bond to a conference at the same place. On the 19th he communicated the result of their deliberations to Lord Hawkesbury from Devizes, where he was engaged to dine with his constituents. "The feelings and sentiments of his friends," he stated, "entirely concurred with his own as regarded Lord B., but that they certainly gave more weight than he did to the objections to his continuance in the House of Commons; and they thought, that if the former point should be arranged, and the union effected, it would be necessary for his credit and comfort that such an object should be accomplished." On the same day on which the above communication was made, Lord Hawkesbury addressed the subjoined letter to Mr. Addington:—

"My dear Sir, St. James's Square, Dec. 19th, 1804.

"I have seen the King to-day, who has expressed, in the *strongest terms*, his personal gratification at the renewal of intercourse which is likely to take place between yourself and Mr. Pitt. I am confident that this event will, of itself, produce a very beneficial effect upon his health. * * * The more, however, I think upon the subject, the more I am convinced that it is not possible to reap all the public advantage that is to be desired from a return of intimacy between you

and Pitt, unless we are all fairly embarked together in government. Believe me ——— will be at work to separate you, as he was before: nine times he will fail, but the tenth he may succeed. Besides, if this should fortunately not be the case, such a state of things cannot fail to give rise to endless speculations. Never was there a time, in the history of any country, so favourable to them; and never was there one in which the bad effects of such speculations were more seriously to be apprehended. If this is a period at which it is more than usually necessary to combine all the energies of the country against our foreign enemies, it is likewise a period at which it is indispensable to confederate all the loyalty, the virtue, the public spirit, and honour of the country against domestic faction. Our object, I know well, is the same; but an object is not unfrequently defeated when the means of pursuing it do not exactly correspond. I beg your pardon for this digression; but I could not resist pressing the subject again upon your consideration. I conclude you will return, as you proposed, to Richmond Park on Saturday, and that you will meet Pitt at Coombe Wood on Sunday, about two o'clock, as we settled. I am, &c. &c.

"HAWKESBURY.

"To the Right Hon. Henry Addington, Devizes."

Mr. Addington was much gratified by the tone and purport of the preceding letter, which proved extremely influential in overcoming his reluctance to accept, what few probably would have objected to — the presidency of the council and a peerage. This is evident from the letter he addressed to his brother, on the 22d of December, immediately after his return to Richmond Park; in which, after stating that five offices had been offered to his friends, "of which two would be opened immediately, and three others with the least delay possible," he proceeded as follows: — "I shall of course hear more on all these points to-morrow, when I am to meet Pitt at Coombe

Wood. My determination is fixed: no difficulties merely personal to myself, if they can be honourably surmounted, shall stand in the way of an arrangement which I believe to be highly material to the comfort of the King, and which is considered by all, but one person, with whom I have conversed, to be fraught with great probable advantages to the public. But to be useful, I must have a practical influence and share in the councils of the King, and this cannot be accomplished unless there is associated with me in office a due proportion of my friends. Without some friend in the House of Lords, and Bathurst and yourself in the House of Commons, *holding official situations*, I could not consent to relinquish my present free agency and numerous comforts."

The interview occurred, as arranged, at Coombe Wood, on Sunday afternoon, and was repeated on the following day. The circumstances were so satisfactory to Mr. Addington, that on the 24th he detailed them in several letters, from which the following particulars have been extracted: —

"As far as a judgment can be formed from a conversation of three hours yesterday and of an hour to-day, there is the fairest prospect of the renewal of old habits of intercourse and friendship. * * * I must say, that every part of Mr. Pitt's conduct, and every sentiment he uttered, convinced me that it is his ardent wish, as God knows it is mine, that past differences should be forgotten, and that our future conduct may manifest perfect coincidence of opinion, and the re-establishment of former intimacy. There are still, however, great obstacles to an official arrangement, to which nothing could reconcile me but a sense of duty to the King, and an opinion that it might be the best security for the continuance of mutual confidence, and of cordiality between Mr. Pitt and myself. * * * My opinion of the past (I

speak of the last two years) is unaltered and unalterable; but it shall never be remembered by me so as to embitter the future. * * * Sure I am that what has just now passed, though it will enable me to give a more regular and cordial support to government, cannot have the effect of strengthening my previous determination to resist those who are labouring to subvert it for no other purpose but that of forcing themselves upon the King."*

In another letter addressed to his brother, on the same day, Mr. Addington entered upon the topics of the conversations between himself and Mr. Pitt:—"It seems to me that Pitt's health is in an uncomfortable state. His spirits however will, I trust, be henceforth more tranquil, and in that case his health will improve. Much, however, will depend upon the strength which government may exhibit at the opening of the session. The Spanish question is not free from awkwardness and difficulty, but I am sure it is fairly defensible: for the Defence Bill nothing can be said. Upon this point he was perfectly fair, and only wished

* Mr. Addington to his brother, Lord Ellenborough, the Speaker, and Mr. Yorke.

Mr. Abbot has recorded in his diary, from Mr. Addington's mouth, the following additional particulars of his interview with Mr. Pitt: — "Lord Hawkesbury quitted the room before Mr. Pitt entered it. On the latter coming in, he stretched out his hand to Mr. Addington, saying, 'I rejoice to take you by the hand again!' The conversation continued three hours, without any third person being present, and, as may be imagined, not without some emotion. Mr. Addington also told Mr. Pitt that numberless little incidents may arise which, if left unexplained, might tend to create uneasiness in future, and urged that such should be communicated instantly as the surest means of preventing any misunderstanding, which, after the sad lesson they both had received, would be of the utmost importance to them. Before a complete support was promised, explanation took place, first, upon the Spanish war and its grounds, and, secondly, on the Defence Bill."

to ascertain precisely the actual military operation of the bill."

The 25th of December was indeed a day of happy omen to the newly reunited friends; for on that festival the correspondence between them, which had ceased for about eighteen months, was renewed by Mr. Pitt. The substance of his friendly letter, which was acknowledged in the most cordial terms, is comprised in the following passage from a note which Mr. Addington addressed on the same day to his brother: — "This afternoon I had a letter from Pitt on the subject of a parliamentary provision for me, about which he is very anxious. He thinks that the peerage should be conferred before the meeting of parliament; that the provision should be voted as soon after as possible, and that in a few weeks subsequent to this, the official arrangement should be made. This is travelling rather fast; for I do not yet see my way through the obstacles to an official arrangement, and much less have I reconciled my mind to the idea of a parliamentary provision. His letter is perfectly cordial. He is to dine here alone to-morrow."

Mr. Pitt's friendly note was not the only gratifying communication which Mr. Addington received on this happy Christmas day. The same afternoon a messenger from Lord Hawkesbury brought him a letter from his Majesty enclosed in the following note: —

"My dear Sir, Coombe Wood, Dec. 25th.

"I received yesterday a letter from the King, expressing an anxious desire to know the result of your meeting on Sunday. I informed his Majesty that I understood from each of you, that it had passed off with the utmost cordiality;

and that this had been fully confirmed by my own personal observations when you met, for the second time, yesterday morning. * * * I have just received a note from the King, expressing his great satisfaction at my account of what had passed; together with two notes, in corresponding terms, to you and Pitt, one of which I enclose. I am, my dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

"HAWKESBURY."

The reader is here presented with the letter of the benignant and paternal monarch.

"Windsor Castle, Dec. 25th, 1804.

"The King has received from Lord Hawkesbury the much-wished-for account of Mr. Addington having met Mr. Pitt at Coombe Wood on Sunday, and that he is convinced their early habitudes of cordial affection are renewed. This gives the King the more satisfaction, as he is fully sensible that their personal attachment to him and to their country are the true causes of this most gratifying event. His Majesty could not refrain from giving Mr. Addington this written testimony of his approbation, and has done the same to Mr. Pitt.

"GEORGE R."

The progress of the negotiation during the four succeeding days is related in the following letter which Mr. Addington addressed to his brother on Saturday, the 29th of December: —

"Mr. Pitt dined here alone on Wednesday, when we discussed a great number of points upon which it was material that I should obtain distinct information, previous to any official arrangement, and to the meeting of parliament. On Thursday I was engaged with visiters till five o'clock, when Vansittart arrived from Bisham. I went to town yesterday; and, in the evening, wrote the enclosed letter to Mr. Pitt. This morning his Majesty came here alone about ten o'clock, and stayed till after twelve; when I went to town,

and had more than an hour's conversation with Mr. Pitt, who met me at Hatsell's. I repeated to him that I was willing to take my full share of responsibility; but I wished to decline office, honours, and parliamentary provision; and that I should be sufficiently connected with government by becoming a member of cabinet. He admitted the force of much that I had written and said; but he is evidently still desirous that I should consent to take office with a peerage. He acknowledges that the only situations in which I could, in that case, be properly placed, are those of President of the Council, Privy Seal, or Secretary of State for the Home or War Department. All this is now under consideration, and will, perhaps, be determined to-morrow. Whatever my feelings and wishes may be, they shall all be subservient to the great objects of completely satisfying the King's mind, and of affording the best security for the continuance of a good understanding between Pitt and myself.

"Of the King's kindness and manner towards me, and of the conversation which took place this morning, I hardly know how to speak; and I can only say, that the whole was satisfactory to the greatest degree. I must say, that every conversation which I have with Pitt confirms and strengthens my hopes as to the future."

Enclosed in the above was a copy of the annexed letter to Mr. Pitt, written on the preceding day:—

"My dear Sir, Richmond Park, Dec. 28th, 1804.

"I went to town to-day in the hope of meeting you at three o'clock, at Mr. Hatsell's; but I learnt that you were gone to Windsor. There are a few points upon which it is material that I should have an opportunity of conversing with you before you set out for Bath; but there is one which will not admit of delay, and which is, therefore, the occasion of the trouble I am now giving you. Every difficulty which arises in forming the arrangement, as far as it relates to myself, and in endeavouring to satisfy the fair claims and pretensions of others, only serves to bring my mind back to the rooted repugnance, of which I cannot divest myself, to the

change which has been proposed in my own situation. I am fully aware that, under present circumstances, my continuance in the House of Commons, without being connected with government, is open to strong and most serious objections; but I really think they would all be completely obviated by my becoming a member of cabinet. My earnest wish is to be completely and cordially embarked with you, for the purpose of affording all possible ease and satisfaction to the mind of the King, and of resisting a combination to overturn his government; but I cannot satisfy myself that, for these objects, it can be material that I should take office, and much less that I should quit the House of Commons. If I could reconcile my mind to the idea of a parliamentary provision, the case would, in one respect, be different; but after having turned it in my mind, and made every allowance for a change of circumstances, I feel that I could not consent to it with propriety and honour; and, without a provision, the acceptance of a peerage presents such a prospect, as, the nearer I am brought to contemplate it, makes me feel more and more what is due to such a station, as well as to the independence and credit of my family. The office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, though granted, as you kindly suggested, for my life, would not get rid of my difficulty: it could be for one life only, and that a very precarious one; besides which, I should not feel satisfied in locking up, under present circumstances, such a branch of the patronage of the Crown, or in taking an office to which no political efficiency is attached, and the sole recommendations of which are derived from its rank, patronage, and emoluments. The plain English of all this is, that I wish to devote all the faculties I possess, and all the exertions of which I am capable, to the service of the King, and to the support of his government in your hands; and that I am anxious to give facility to arrangements, with respect to others, in a way which would relieve my own mind to a degree which I am unable to describe. This letter is written without any communication with any individual, and its contents will be known only to my son, by whom it will be transcribed. Indeed, I very much doubt whether any one of my family or friends would

entirely concur in the sentiments which it expresses. I will only add, that every thing which has passed between us has, in all respects, fully met my wishes, and that I shall ever remain, affectionately yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

Mr. Addington also requested the opinion of Lord Ellenborough on this perplexing question; and as his Lordship's answer very ably states the arguments on both sides, it is here subjoined: —

To the Right Hon. Henry Addington.

"My dear Sir, Dec. 26th, 1804.

"I have turned again in my mind the last subject of our conversation yesterday, upon which you desired me to give you my opinion. I am very unwilling that your strong claim to parliamentary requital for services (as to the merit of which all parties in the House of Commons are agreed) should be abandoned, if it can be preserved and enforced without prejudice to your estimation with the public, which, on account of the public itself, and your means of serving it, is most important at the present crisis to increase as much as possible. Many of the objections which existed as to the acceptance of this provision at the close of your late administration apply with equal force, or perhaps with greater, at the present moment. It will certainly wear the appearance of a compact with your successor more decidedly now than it would have done then. And besides, it will be presented to the eyes of the public, together with other arrangements for the benefit of your personal and political friends, in an obnoxious point of view. This may have the effect of deducting somewhat from the high estimation in which your character has been deservedly held on the score of disinterestedness. I think I have fairly stated the objections against the measure. On the other side, is it just that you should be required, for the convenience of the public service, to accept a high permanent rank in the country, entailing upon you and your family, with those honours, the burden of maintaining them at an

expense exceeding the limits of your patrimonial fortune; that you should quit the place in which your political estimation has been earned, and where you are surrounded by every thing which confers personal elevation and consequence, and that you should at the same time forego claims to which you cannot recur in any future House of Commons, and probably with inferior effect and propriety at any later period in the existence of the present? It is certainly not just that these sacrifices should be expected, or even received from you, on the part of the public. I may take, perhaps, a too timid view of the subject; but personal considerations of a prudential kind certainly appear, to my poor judgment, to oppose the acceptance of the peerage, without an adequate provision being first made by parliament. As I know the character of your mind, I shall not be surprised if you act against the cold-blooded opinion I have ventured to give. Whatever you decide, 'felix faustumque sit!' is the sincere prayer of your affectionate and obliged humble servant,

"ELLENBOROUGH."

Mr. Addington's frank and manly communication to Mr. Pitt betokened the restoration of ancient feelings; and the latter showed his appreciation of the confidence thus reposed in him, by taking two days for consideration before he returned the following answer: —

"My dear Sir, "Downing Street, Dec. 30th, 1804.

"I have taken till this morning to consider over fully the interesting and important point on which you wished me to send you my opinion; and, on the best reflection that I can give the subject, I must fairly own to you, that I think your accepting a seat in the House of Peers, with either of the offices we talked of, is infinitely better calculated (to effect) the great object which you have in view in the whole of this arrangement, than the other alternative which you have suggested. I am sure I meet your wishes in telling you frankly and sincerely what I think; and if you feel that you can

accede to my opinion, I shall be happy to receive your authority to write without delay to the Duke of Portland.*

"I find it will be impossible for me, in any case, to leave town before to-morrow; and I begin to doubt whether I shall not think it better to postpone my journey to Bath until Easter. Yours sincerely and affectionately,

"W. PITT."

The decisive character of the above evidently sincere opinion, devotion to his sovereign, whose gracious visit to Richmond Park must have expanded to the utmost stretch every loyal feeling in his bosom, and the obvious political importance of uniting all who could be induced to rally round the King's government, decided Mr. Addington's conduct; and he immediately announced to Mr. Pitt in the following note his determination to sacrifice all personal considerations to a sense of duty to his King and country: —

"My dear Sir, Richmond Park, Dec. 30th.

"You have indeed fully met my wishes, by having given me your unreserved and deliberate opinion upon the point which, I am sorry to think, has occasioned you so much trouble. Believe me, I am perfectly and completely satisfied. The great object which we both have in view is the first of all considerations; and, on my part, every other shall give way to the most effectual mode of attaining it. It is certainly now desirable that you should write to the Duke of Portland without delay. * * * Sincerely and affectionately yours,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

On the following day he communicated his decision

* The Duke of Portland held the office of President of the Council, but was anxious to retire from it on account of his health.

to his brother in these words: — "You will be glad to hear that the utter impossibility of my enduring the appearance of a reward of parliamentary conduct at the opening of the session produced an immediate and decisive objection on my part to Mr. Pitt's proposition. The peerage is, I plainly see, unavoidable; but I will not accept it till the official arrangement is settled: as to a parliamentary provision, I have told Mr. Pitt that I cannot consent it shall be even a topic of conversation between us; and I have obtained a promise from him, that a message upon such a subject shall not be sent to parliament (as his Majesty, I have reason to believe, intends) without my knowledge. It would give you pleasure to read the letters which I have received: amongst others, those from Lord Chatham, the Master of the Rolls, the Solicitor-General, and Yorke. Lord Ellenborough and Sir William Grant dined here yesterday, with a large and joyous party. The latter stayed the night. He is friendly to the greatest degree, and, you will be happy to hear, approves most cordially of the exact line which I have pursued."

Numerous, indeed, were the congratulations which now flowed in upon Mr. Addington from the members of that faithful phalanx whose independent support had rendered a reconciliation with him so essential to the permanency of Mr. Pitt's government. The sentiments which these gentlemen expressed on the occasion, though varied in character, were accordant in principle. They all attributed the happy "reconciliation between two men who never ought to have been otherwise than friends," to the "active and successful interposition of the King." Mr. Shaw Le-

fevre, whose letter may be regarded as speaking for the whole, rejoiced that "it would restore to the nation the benefit of those counsels under which its best energies were so ably and completely brought into action." In common, however, with Lord Rous and Dr. Goodenough, Mr. Lefevre could not help expressing doubts which were destined too soon to be realised, whether the reconciliation would be permanent, however cordial Mr. Pitt's present disposition might be.

"If," he proceeds, "a genuine cordiality should be restored, I can feel no anxiety as to the means adopted for its accomplishment. That high personage has too often and too strongly manifested his true respect for you to bring forward such a measure, otherwise than on conditions of justice to you; and you are too zealous a guardian of your own honour to agree to a re-union, without ample and satisfactory explanation. Upon this point I am perfectly at ease; but after Mr. Pitt's conduct during his last struggle for power, I shall not readily give him my confidence until he distinctly shows a disposition to make the *amende honorable*. * * * To one influence, indeed, he has for years been subject, which, if it is to continue, I fear there is little hope that the reconciliation will be of long duration."

Such were the circumstances under which Mr. Addington concluded this eventful year. He was again about to embark, most reluctantly, upon the stormy waves of politics: he relinquished the usual compensation for his long and able services as Speaker; and he was on the point of having an honour thrust upon him which he had before declined, and which he then and ever afterwards considered prejudicial to his family. On the other hand, he had shown his attachment to his sovereign, fulfilled his duty to his country, and regained his early friend: consequently he could

warmly re-echo Mr. Manners Sutton's observation, that "this was the merriest Christmas he had enjoyed for many years." *

The first letter of importance which bears the date of the new year is one of which the claim to insertion is considered irresistible, although, notwithstanding the care with which the extracts have been made, some repetition of the contents of previous letters is found unavoidable: —

To the Right Hon. Charles Bathurst.

"My dear Charles, Richmond Park, Jan. 3d, 1805.

* * * * *

"Mr. Pitt dined here alone on Wednesday the 26th, and he seemed glad to renew his acquaintance with Mrs. Addington and the rest of our party. We conversed quite unreservedly, and with nearly as much freedom and ease as heretofore. On Friday morning we were to have met at Hatsell's; but Mr. Pitt was summoned to Windsor. On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock, his Majesty came here alone, without previous notice, and stayed till twelve. It is hardly possible for me to convey to you a just idea of the satisfaction he manifested. He spoke of you with the greatest kindness; and brought some papers for my perusal, which he directed me to bring to Kew yesterday (Wednesday) at twelve o'clock. This I accordingly did, and stayed with his Majesty whilst he ate his dinner, to which he sat down rather before one. † This interview was not less gratifying to me

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* Two circumstances should be mentioned, as having occurred in the year 1804, which must have much interested Mr. Addington: one, the death of his revered master and friend, the Rev. William Gilpin; the other, the elevation, through his recommendation to Lord Hardwicke, of Dr. Butson, Dean of Waterford, to the see of Clonfert. The former event occurred in April, the latter in July.

† Extract from a letter from Mr. Addington to his brother, dated December 29th: — "I am just returned from Kew, where I

than the former. After the King's departure from hence on Saturday, I went to town, where I met Mr. Pitt, by appointment, at Mr. Hatsell's. He was perfectly cordial; and upon that occasion I brought him and Vansittart together, when the latter received a satisfactory explanation (respecting some circumstances which occurred in the summer), without which he would not have taken office. Having stated these particulars, which I know must interest you, I proceed to other topics. * * * I told Mr. Pitt that I had no personal objection to Mr. Canning's going to Ireland, but that which arose from the possibility of its being supposed that I had intimated a wish for his removal from hence, than which nothing could be farther from my thoughts: indeed I had before said, in answer to something which Mr. Pitt had thrown out respecting Canning, that I had not a wish to interfere with his friendships, his situation, or his prospects. * * * Nothing is finally settled respecting myself, excepting that no consideration shall induce me to accept a parliamentary provision, or the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, which has been offered me for life. My determination is to acquiesce in whatever may, upon full consideration, be thought *necessary* for the public service, and in nothing more: there would, I see, be little chance of cordial co-operation if I were to remain in the House of Commons.

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passed an hour and a half with his Majesty, and partook of his dinner, which consisted of mutton chops and pudding, He was in excellent spirits, and quite well." This extract is inserted not to gratify idle curiosity, but to show the patriarchal simplicity of the royal diet.

It is proper to state here what Mr. Abbot has recorded, as derived from Mr. Addington himself, that "the object of the two interviews with which the King honoured his late minister, was to consult him respecting the education of the Princess Charlotte; and that his Majesty marked his confidence towards Mr. Pitt in the most delicate manner, by abstaining from the slightest allusion to Mr. Addington's return to office until after the whole arrangement had been completed. This, when told to Mr. Pitt, made a strong impression."

It will probably end in my taking either the Presidentship of the Council or the office of Privy Seal.

"The Opposition are collecting all their strength for the first day, when it is of extreme importance that you should attend. Mr. Pitt is very anxious on this subject, and I am, if possible, still more so, as some things may be said, particularly on the subject of a parliamentary provision, which cannot be noticed by any one with so much propriety as by yourself. * * * I am, dear Charles, your affectionate

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

On the 4th of January Mr. Pitt informed Mr. Addington that he "had written to the Duke of Portland, and expected his answer in the course of the day;" and he appointed the following morning for an interview at Putney Hill, when he "trusted they might be able to fix the day for the arrangement taking place."

The conversation here alluded to, as Mr. Addington informed his brother on the 6th, "was extremely satisfactory. Carew, Sullivan, and Vansittart," he proceeded, "are to be called to the privy council. Pitt is endeavouring to open immediately offices for Bathurst, Vansittart, and yourself. He hopes to see you at the dinner in Downing Street, and at the previous reading of the speech; and he likewise hopes for your company at a dinner at which he means to assemble many re-united friends, on the Wednesday following." Mr. Addington added, in a postscript, dated "Sunday evening, 9 o'clock," that it was now decided that he was to succeed the Duke of Portland as President of the Council; and when his Grace subsequently declined the Chancellorship of the Duchy, the latter office was conferred on Lord Buckinghamshire, who expressed to Mr. Addington, in a most

grateful note, "the indelible sense he entertained of the effectual exertions which he had made to place him in that situation." The re-union, therefore, was now arranged in a manner equally honourable to Mr. Addington's character, and satisfactory to his feelings; for he had received from his sovereign, at the recommendation of the Minister, a public recognition of his services; and found the same party who had so recently disparaged his abilities and blamed his measures anxiously seeking his co-operation. "Well, therefore," as Sir Edward Pellew, when writing to him from India on those events, observed, "might he, upon every consideration, look back with a proud heart." Thus, to use his own words, "he was on the eve of being again plunged into the bustle of official business and political warfare; but the times were pressing, and every one should do his best." His last meeting with his constituents at Devizes took place on the 9th of January, and was, as he told his brother, "a painful one to all parties." Five days afterwards he formally received the unanimous thanks of that constituency "for the many and eminent public services which he had rendered to his country during the long time in which he had represented them in parliament, for his patriotic conduct in obeying the call of his sovereign to take the first place in his councils; for the respite he procured to the country by a peace shortened only by the implacable spirit of the enemy; for the bold, vigorous, and decisive measures he pursued when peace was no longer compatible with the honour of the nation, whereby the country was placed on a rock of security; and, lastly, for his patriotism in retiring from the helm of state when the intrigues of

party and voice of faction impeded the constitutional exercise of the executive government, and threatened to render abortive the wisest plans and most efficient councils." After congratulating him on his peerage, and the nation on his re-admission to the cabinet, the address concluded by expressing "pride and satisfaction that a man so deserving of their thanks should have commenced public life as their representative, and had continued to fill the same seat until the present period; and that during six successive elections no circumstance had occurred by which the honour of the representative, or the independence of the electors, had, in any respect, been sullied."

Lord Sidmouth acknowledged the congratulations of his faithful electors, not in the formal language of politeness, but with sentiments of heartfelt gratitude and respect; and he has since frequently declared, that during the numerous elections which occurred in the twenty-two years for which he represented the borough, he never was put to the smallest expence, nor experienced a single attempt to interfere with the freedom of his vote. In the autumn of 1814, whilst yet retaining the recordership, he presented to the borough a stone market cross, which still exists as an example to future times of the sympathy which ought ever to subsist between a representative and his electors.*

* This elegant monument of the donor's liberality and Mr. Wyatt's skill, bears the following inscription:—

"This market cross was erected by Henry, Viscount Sidmouth, as a memorial of his grateful attachment to the borough of Devizes, of which he has been recorder thirty years, and of which he was six times unanimously chosen a representative in parliament.

"The mayor and corporation avail themselves of the stability of

The title which Mr. Addington assumed was that of Sidmouth. He declined the dignity of an earldom chiefly on account of the rank which it would impose upon his daughters; and as Mr. Pitt assured him that "a barony was a useless addition, and that it was quite as usual to take a viscountcy without it," he dispensed with that also. The first person who addressed him by his new title was that friend to whom he owed his first and great elevation to the chair of the House of Commons: this he did in the following words: —

"Downing Street, Friday, Jan. 11th, 1805, six P.M.

"Dear *Lord Sidmouth*,

"The Duke of Portland waves the chancellorship of the duchy, and agrees to remain in the cabinet without office. Nothing could be kinder or handsomer than his whole conduct; and, unless he should be more unwell to-morrow, our cabinet is to be at Burlington House.

"Affectionately yours, W. P."

His Lordship kissed hands as Viscount Sidmouth on the 11th, and was sworn Lord President of his

this building to transmit to future times the record of an awful event which occurred in this market place in the year 1753, hoping that it may serve as a salutary warning against the danger of impiously invoking Divine vengeance, or of calling on the holy name of God to conceal the devices of falsehood and fraud.

"On Thursday, the 25th of January, 1753, Ruth Pierce, of Pottern, in this county, agreed with three other women to buy a sack of wheat in the market, each paying her due proportion towards the same. One of the women, in collecting the several quotas of money, discovered a deficiency, and demanded of Ruth Pierce the sum that was wanting to make good the amount. Ruth protested she had paid her share, and said she wished she might drop down dead if she had not. She rashly repeated this awful wish, when, to the consternation and terror of the beholders, she instantly fell down and expired, having the money concealed in her hand."

Majesty's most honourable privy council on the 14th of January; and on the same day Lord Buckinghamshire also received his cabinet appointment; and Messrs. Vansittart, Pole Carew, and John Sullivan were sworn of the privy council. On the 11th Mr. Pitt returned to ancient habits, by communicating to Lord Sidmouth a letter which the Emperor Napoleon had just addressed to the King with a general proposal of peace. "I send you," Mr. Pitt observed, "a copy of a very unexpected and singular communication which has arrived from France, and is probably calculated for the purpose of embarrassing government at the opening of the session. You will see also the draft of the proposed answer, which, I think, will turn the incident to our advantage both here and abroad. "Lord Sidmouth solicited all his friends to assemble at the meeting of parliament on the 15th, when one of them, Mr. Charles Adams, seconded the address. He himself, immediately after his Majesty had delivered his speech on that day, was introduced by Lords Wentworth and Sidney with the usual formalities, and took his seat in the House of Peers. The sentiments with which his parliamentary friends supported him on this occasion were well expressed by Mr. Eyre, M. P. for Nottinghamshire, in the following words, dated "Grove, January 14th: —

"I am convinced your again taking an efficient part in the administration will carry the support of many independent members of parliament, and the confidence of the country. Should you inspire your new colleagues with the same principles which actuated your late administration, and which prompted you not to lose sight of economy in the midst of the most vigorous exertions, and to reject some measures apparently more efficient, rather than infringe the constitu-

tion, in the purity of which consists our greatest strength, the government will be zealously supported by the country at large, and may defy any combination of parties."

As Lord Sidmouth's present office did not, like his former one, burden him with the chief responsibility for government measures, it is not intended to enter upon the political transactions of the period farther than his Lordship was personally concerned in them. Pursuing, then, the records of his private life comprised in the correspondence, we trace the gradual renewal of his intimacy with Mr. Pitt. Mr. Abbot had seen them together in Downing Street on the 12th of January, and thought "their manner towards each other was cold and constrained;" but Lord Sidmouth informed his brother on the 1st of February that "Pitt had sat with him till past twelve the night before, and that the conversation was, upon the whole, the most comfortable they had held for above three years."* An event, however, was unhappily ripening, destined to effect ere long a second and final separation between the friends. On the 13th of February the commissioners for naval inquiry, who, it will be remembered, had been appointed by the Addington administration to inquire generally into the state of the navy, presented their tenth report, wherein they reflected on the conduct of Mr. Trotter, Paymaster of the Navy, as also on that of Lord Melville, who for many

* Mr. Pitt's sincerity at this time appears unquestionable. "I am sure," he said to Mr. Wilberforce on the 1st of February, "that you are glad to hear that Addington and I are one again. I think they are a little hard upon us in finding fault with our making it up again, when we have been friends from our childhood, and our fathers were so before us."

years had, as treasurer, presided over that department. It is not intended to enter farther upon the circumstances which resulted from this disclosure, which deprived Mr. Pitt of one of his earliest, most active, and most efficient official coadjutors, than is absolutely necessary for the explanation of Lord Sidmouth's conduct. But since, in conjunction with his friends, he felt it to be a duty to support the recommendation of his own commission, whilst Mr. Pitt naturally viewed the conduct of his old and valued friend in the most favourable light, the progress of the question, almost of necessity, brought them into collision, and hence some notice of it is indispensable. The months of February and March, however, elapsed before the crisis arrived: advantage, therefore, will be taken of the interval briefly to mention a few circumstances which must not be entirely overlooked. One of these, namely, the proposal for the repeal of the Additional Force Bill (which was now treated as an entire failure by all but its authors, and even by them was very feebly defended), inevitably endangered the recent alliance, by bringing Lord Sidmouth's and Mr. Pitt's plans of defence into direct comparison.

On this subject his Lordship, whilst availing himself of the debate of the 15th of February to express, with that manly rectitude which belonged to his character, yet with a moderation which must have been soothing to his new allies, his decided preference for the Army of Reserve Act, at the same time declared his intention to support the measure of the present government, as the only expedient remaining after the failure of his own. In the debate, however, in the Commons upon the 6th of March, the same con-

ciliatory spirit was not shown, and Mr. Sheridan, who moved the repeal of the bill, contrasted Mr. Pitt's feeble performances with the vilified preparations of his predecessor in a manner highly favourable to the latter. "What," he said, "was the Right Hon. Gentleman's promise, after declaring that his predecessors were unworthy of being trusted? 'Let me come to clear away all the rubbish: I will set every thing to rights.' He comes; but does nothing half so good, nor half so vigorous, as the much-abused ministers who were turned out to make way for him." Expressions of this nature irritated Mr. Pitt to taunt Mr. Sheridan for his support of Lord Sidmouth's government, which led to a reply from the latter which Lord Brougham has pronounced the most eloquent of all his speeches, and is reported to have drawn from Mr. Pitt unequivocal marks of vexation and displeasure.*

"The right honourable gentleman," he said, "has thought fit to allude to the support which I gave to Lord Sidmouth,

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* "Of all Sheridan's speeches there can be little doubt that the most powerful, as the most chaste, was his reply, in 1805, upon the motion which he had made for repealing the Defence Act. Mr. Pitt had unwarily thrown out a sneer at his support of Mr. Addington, as though it was insidious. Such a stone, cast by a person whose house in that aspect was one pane of glass, could not fail to call down a shower of missiles."—*Lord Brougham's Historical Sketches*, first series, p. 216. His Lordship has added in a note, that "Sheridan wrote this speech during the debate at a coffee-house, and it is reported most accurately, probably from his own notes." After the introduction of this extract in so admired and well-known a work, the author trusts that there can be no objection to his here quoting the sentiments of so celebrated a man as Mr. Sheridan to the political character of Lord Sidmouth, notwithstanding the extreme severity and exaggeration of some of the remarks on Mr. Pitt.

when that noble lord was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He represents it as an insidious and hollow support. I hope it is not my character to give any support of that description. I say I gave my support to the late administration with the most perfect good faith; and I know that the noble lord has always been ready to acknowledge it. But supposing I had not supported him with firmness and fidelity; what then? I never had professed to do so, either to that administration or to this House. I supported them because I approved of many of their measures; but principally was I induced to support them because I considered their continuance in office a security against the return to power of the right honourable gentleman opposite me, which ever appeared to me as the greatest national calamity. If, indeed, I had recommended the noble lord to his Majesty — if I had come down to the House and described the noble lord as the fittest man in the country to fill the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer because it was a convenient step to my own safety, in retiring from a situation which I could no longer fill with honour, — if, having seduced him into that situation, I had afterwards tapered off from a prominent support, when I saw that the minister of my own choice was acquiring greater stability and popularity than I wished for — if, when I saw an opening to my own return to power, I had entered into a combination with others, whom I meant also to betray, from the sole lust of power and office, in order to remove him, — and if, under the dominion of these base appetites, I had then treated with ridicule and contempt the very man whom I had before held up to the choice of my Sovereign, and the approbation of this House and the public, — then, indeed, I should have merited the contempt of all good men, and should have deserved to be told that I was hollow and insincere in my support, and had acted a mean and perfidious part."

Notwithstanding the moderation of Lord Sidmouth's own language, such reproaches as these, whether well-founded or not, contributed, probably, to impede the entire restoration of harmony between his Lordship and Mr. Pitt, and the preference given by almost

every speaker in either House to the plan of defence proposed by the former, must have tended to the same effect. Even Lord Camden, one of Mr. Pitt's constant supporters, when replying to Lord King's motion for a committee of inquiry, admitted that "it was, upon the whole, a good measure, and through which a number of men had been raised." This, it will be remembered, was the pivot of the discussions which had occasioned his Lordship's resignation; Mr. Pitt having reprobated his plans of defence, and thereby intimated his own ability to substitute better, and parliament having credited that intimation. Lord Sidmouth, however, when called upon by the Duke of Clarence to speak upon Lord King's motion, expressed himself with calmness and discretion; and whilst asserting the superior value of his own system, and his disapproval of that of his successor, claimed for the latter "a fuller and prolonged trial; if not for other reasons, at least out of respect for the legislature by which it had been sanctioned. The defence act was now a law; and though he had at first disapproved of it, and his opinion was still unchanged as to its principle, he was bound to bow to the wisdom of parliament." *

* Before this subject is finally dismissed, it is desirable to add another testimony to the efficiency of Lord Sidmouth's preparations for defence, mentioned in a letter from the Rev. T. Le Mesurier, dated November 7th, 1804. "What I have now to say will surprise you. At the last quarter sessions at Aylesbury, the Marquis of Buckingham publicly, after dinner, declared that the late administration had made wonderful exertions in the raising of men for the public service. He said they had not done some things as he might have done; and thought them wrong in not having the militia more forward; but when they set to it in February,

During these proceedings, the Tenth Report of the Committee of Naval Inquiry attracted the increasing attention, both of parliament and the public; and, at length, Mr. Whitbread gave notice of an explicit motion, in the House of Commons, on the subject. The manner in which this question affected the relations between Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Pitt is, probably, best explained in the diary of Mr. Abbot, to which, therefore, it is again necessary to have recourse: —

"*Monday, April* 1*st.* — Mr. Pitt moved for a copy of Lord Melville's explanatory letter to the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry. It is understood that Lords Sidmouth, Buckinghamshire, and Hawkesbury, have expressed an opinion that Lord Melville should either stand an inquiry or resign."

"*Sunday,* 7*th.* — Called on Mr. Pitt, by appointment. Gave him my collection of precedents applicable to Mr. Whitbread's motion of to-morrow. He told me that the course proposed by Opposition was, first, to go into a committee of the whole House, and then conclude with some resolution of censure; that his present intention was, to move for a select committee to examine into the various points arising out of the Report, but that he was expecting the Master of the Rolls and the Attorney and Solicitor General on the subject. On my ride back from Downing Street, I met Lord Sidmouth, who gave me the following particulars of what had passed respecting Lord Melville: — 'That Mr. Pitt had first asked his opinion on the question on Saturday, March the 30th; that in reply he had unreservedly expressed his conviction of the impossibility of Lord Melville clearing himself with the public; that he had not yet sounded his friends as to their opinions, but that he had no doubt of the nature of their sentiments; that he had warned Mr. Pitt of the danger of committing himself in a defence of Lord M., by which he must

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between that and November in the last year, it was wonderful what they had done."

lose himself with the nation, and which would render it impracticable for himself to continue of the same government. Mr. Pitt said such an event would be destruction, and that if Lord Sidmouth's friends concurred in the proposed vote of censure, it must be carried. Lord Sidmouth suggested that the only course to be taken was, to refer the inquiry to a committee. After this conversation nothing material had occurred till Thursday last, April 4th, when his Lordship went to Mr. Pitt in the country, and distinctly urged the measure of a committee. Lord Hawkesbury had all along been strongly for it, and Lord Castlereagh also, latterly.' On Friday this was communicated to Lord Melville, who very reluctantly acceded to it. Lord Sidmouth was also of opinion that Lord Melville ought to relieve the King's government from any hazard, and retire during the approaching recess at Easter."

Mr. Abbot then describes the debate on the 8th of April, upon Mr. Whitbread's motion for censure on Lord Melville, when the numbers were 216 on each side, and he gave the casting vote in favour of the motion*; and on the following day records, with much satisfaction, that both Mr. Pitt and Lord Sidmouth had admitted the propriety of his vote of the preceding night. "Lord Melville," he adds, "resigned this day."

The parliament was adjourned from the 11th to the 25th of April, for the Easter vacation; during which period Lord Sidmouth resumed his correspondence with his brother and others. Writing to the former, on the 16th, he observed:—

* The intense anxiety which Mr. Pitt showed on this trying occasion is mentioned in the "Life of Wilberforce," vol. iii. p. 223. "He could not conceal his agitation when he saw the turn Mr. Wilberforce's speech was taking." Mr. Addington's friends all voted with Mr. Pitt for the committee of inquiry.

"My notion was that Whitbread intended to address the King to remove Lord Melville from his councils, and this, after the vote of Monday, could not, I think, and Mr. Pitt thought so too, have been objected to on good grounds. Happily, the Opposition, elated with their victory, went too far, but the prospect is still dismal. * * * Nothing is settled respecting a successor to Lord Melville, nor has the office been yet offered to any one. Mr. Pitt has not, of his own accord, conversed with me at all upon the subject. I am determined not to take that office under present circumstances. Observing, as I do, that the intercourse with a certain person, * * * is growing more and more frequent, I look with uneasiness and distrust to the relation in which I stand to the government, and with great apprehension to what appears to be impending over the King and country. * * * Windham once said that he never before despaired of the country. I am very far from despairing now; but

'Forward though I canna see,
I guess and fear.'"

To these observations his brother very judiciously replied, that "although he fully participated in his forebodings, still he trusted that he would remain at his present post till a case occurred when a continuance would be inconsistent with what he owed to his own honour, or to the interests of the country: let the *onus exculpandi* rest elsewhere."

"Lord Sidmouth," as he informed Mr. Abbot on the 26th, "was now exerting what remaining influence he possessed with Mr. Pitt, in the endeavour to obtain some proper arrangement of the Admiralty. To this end, he successively proposed that Lord Hood, or Lord Castlereagh, or Mr. Yorke, or Lord Hawkesbury, should be placed there; and to facilitate the last-named arrangement, offered to take the seals of the Home Department. This, however, Mr. Pitt

put by, with an announced intention to place Lord Camden there, in case of Lord Hawkesbury's quitting. All these, and other points, were discussed when Mr. Pitt dined with him, on Friday the 19th, and Mr. Pitt promised to be with him the next day to settle the arrangements." He was unable, however, to fulfil this engagement, but on the 21st, forwarded to Lord Sidmouth the note which will be presently submitted. Meanwhile, on the 20th, his Lordship addressed to his bro her the following additional particulars: —

"I have spoken quite unreservedly to Golding, C. Adams, Lefevre, Dickens, &c. &c., all of whom have called here during the recess. They are all, I am sure, anxious to support government, and alarmed at the hopes given to Opposition. Nothing is settled respecting a successor to Lord M. Lord Hawkesbury, to whom alone it has been offered, has declined it. Lord Buckinghamshire and Yorke are now thought of, and Sir Charles Middleton. If Lord B. should be fixed upon, I told Mr. Pitt that I concluded he would offer the chancellorship of the duchy to Bathurst, in which he appeared to acquiesce. In this case all the arrangements will take place together, *if* — but I need not tell you that I will never separate myself from the King's service whilst I have a chance of being useful to him and to the public, without dishonour to myself; but to be the mere instrument of political convenience, or to be applied to the purposes of covering or sharing disgrace, is impossible. A large party dined here yesterday: Pitt and Hawkesbury were of the number. With the former I was to have had a full conversation this morning, but he was obliged to go to town. On Monday we go to Windsor*, where we are to remain till Friday morning."

Before his departure to attend that ceremony, a note from Mr. Pitt, dated "Downing Street, Sunday

* To attend a grand installation of Knights of the Garter.

night, April 21st," announced to Lord Sidmouth the completion of the cabinet arrangements in the following terms: —

"It is become impossible to delay longer the decision respecting the Admiralty; and after weighing all the alternatives, I end at last in thinking that the appointment of Sir Charles Middleton (though not without some objections) is, on the whole, the best for the essential and pressing points of the naval service at this moment, and liable to less inconvenience than any other that has presented itself. I am, therefore, writing to-night to the King, to submit to him this opinion as the best I can form. I wish there was more chance than I am afraid there is of your thinking that I have decided right.

"A cabinet is summoned for twelve to-morrow, in consequence of the further communications which we received yesterday from Woronzow, of the same date with those from Lord G. Leveson, but more particular, and much more promising. Is there any chance of your coming to it before you set out to Windsor?"

Lord Sidmouth, as Mr. Pitt anticipated, strongly disapproved of this arrangement, and consequently immediately announced his intention to retire, in the following reply, which he despatched by the same messenger: —

"My dear Sir, Richmond Park, April 22d, half-past 12.

"I deplore the choice which you have made. It will, I fear, have the effect of weakening and lowering the government at a time when it is peculiarly important to give it additional strength, and to raise its character. To me it is a decisive proof that my continuance in office could neither be useful to the public, nor honourable to myself: an opinion to which I have long been compelled to incline, and which is confirmed by this arrangement, and the circumstances with which it is attended. My own earnest wish is to withdraw from public life; but I trust that I shall never fail to mani-

fest my attachment and fixed adherence to the King, and the disposition which I strongly feel to maintain and cultivate an intercourse of cordiality and friendship with yourself. I am sorry to have detained your messenger, but Lord Redesdale, the Master of the Rolls, and Mr. Hatsell, were with me when your note arrived, and did not go from hence till between eleven and twelve o'clock. It would have been impossible for me, even if I had received a summons sooner, to have gone to town this morning. Yours, &c.

"SIDMOUTH."

As his Lordship had no particular grounds of objection against Sir Charles Middleton, either of a public or private nature, it may at first excite surprise that he should have viewed this appointment with so much dissatisfaction. The reasons however by which he was actuated, and which will be found fully detailed by his own pen in the succeeding pages, were weighty and important, if not altogether conclusive, and were deemed at the time perfectly satisfactory by his friends; one of whom, in the subjoined note, immediately declared an intention of following his example: —

"My dear Lord, Windsor, April 23d.

"After a great deal of reflection upon the subject you mentioned to me last night, I am most decidedly of opinion that the step you have taken was unavoidable; and I must request you would have the goodness to consider when may be the most proper time for me to make a communication similar to yours to Mr. Pitt, my mind being irrevocably determined to pursue the same course as that which you have adopted.

"Believe me ever, with the most cordial attachment, yours most sincerely,

"BUCKINGHAMSHIRE."

That Lord Sidmouth did not himself entertain a

doubt as to the propriety of the step he had taken, is evident from the following extracts from the letters in which he described the circumstance to his brother and Mr. Bathurst: —

"Richmond Park, April 22d.

"The die, my dear Hiley, appears to be cast. This morning I received from Mr. Pitt the enclosed note. If a person of weight and efficiency had been appointed, there could have been no ground for complaint; but to select an individual who has little professional and no political importance, and thereby to forego the means of making an arrangement conformable to the pledge given to me in December last, and which would have been at the same time far more satisfactory to parliament and the public, is to declare that any expedient is preferable to the admission into office of those with whom I am connected. * * * I shall write to Bathurst to-day. My head is in an uncomfortable state, and concurs in the admonition to me to withdraw, if I mean to preserve life and character. God knows, however, that my thoughts are turned towards others and the public, and that I feel no anxiety about myself, excepting that I may act properly. Adieu."

His letter to Mr. Bathurst, alluded to above, contains the following fresh matter: —

"You will have seen that a crisis has arisen. It appeared to me that I had only one line to pursue, and I am fully satisfied with it, upon deliberate reflection. The only person with whom I communicated was Hatsell, who was with me when Mr. Pitt's messenger arrived. In consequence of the earnest wish and representation of Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt, I have determined not to mention any thing to the King, till I have seen them again."

Two days afterwards, he sent his brother the following particulars of a conversation he had just held with Mr. Pitt: —

"This morning Mr. Pitt and I passed an hour together. He had felt strongly in consequence of my note, and wished for explanations, which I gave him without reserve, dwelling particularly on the known opinions of Sir C. Middleton on naval subjects, and his intimate connexion with his predecessor, independently of the obstacles which such an appointment created to the just pretensions of my friends. * * * He reasoned with me on my objections, and answered one of them, viz. that the First Lord of the Admiralty ought to be in parliament, by stating that Sir Charles was to be created a peer. He pressed me to consider all he had represented to me (which he did with great earnestness and kindness), and to suspend my final determination until he had made the experiment. I assured him I would take no step before I had fully considered all that he had said; and that he should then hear from me. He begged me not to write, but to state in conversation what I wished to say. I told him that I was afraid of that, for his manner a good deal affected me; but

'Mens immota manet: lacrymæ volvuntur inanes.'"

On the 25th, his Lordship sent a letter to Mr. Pitt, of which no copy has been preserved; but, as he informed his brother, it was to express his desire that the communication of his purpose of resigning might no longer be delayed. The note in which he made this communication to his brother concludes with these words: — "I must prepare for the *fête* at Frogmore. My reflections when there will be uncomfortable. The gaieties will soon be over, and God knows what will follow."

It may possibly be thought that the particulars of this transaction are too fully stated, especially as Lord Sidmouth will be found to have retracted, or rather suspended, his resignation at Mr. Pitt's earnest request; but since his Lordship evidently regarded this as an important epoch in his life, and since the

present statement will serve to explain the cause of his subsequent retirement in July, it is deemed advisable, even at the cost of some repetitions, to insert two more letters on the subject. The first is one which he addressed to Lord Hawkesbury on his return from Windsor, and is dated "Richmond Park, April 27th: —

"My dear Lord,

"You well know the state of my mind previous to the appointment of Sir Charles Middleton, and must therefore be aware that it served to confirm (and not merely to create) the opinion that I could not remain in office with comfort and honour to myself. The relation in which I have stood to Pitt for the last four months has not been what I hoped for and expected. The influence of an individual, possessing neither the confidence of parliament nor of the public, and personally hostile to me, instead of being diminished, as you know I had reason to believe, is apparently increased; my friends are accordingly compelled to think that the reconciliation with Pitt is not, on his part, cordial and sincere; that they and I are only made use of for purposes of political convenience; and that the confidence which, I am sure, has been deserved, has been coldly and imperfectly given both to them and to myself. The appointment of Sir Charles Middleton could not fail to strengthen many of these impressions. He is known to be intimately connected with the person, in a parliamentary censure of whom they would have concurred, had it not been for the course adopted by Mr. Pitt; and his appointment will unquestionably be considered as the result of Lord Melville's influence.* He is also, with reason, looked upon as unfriendly to the commission of inquiry which *I* proposed, and *they* supported; and to me, and to many of them, it is well known,

* Mr. Wilberforce has recorded in his diary for April 12th, 1805, that "Sir Charles Middleton told him that Lord Melville had advised Pitt to recommend him to the King for First Lord of the Admiralty." It appears, however, from Lord Sidmouth's letter of the 28th of April to his brother, that both his Lordship and Sir Charles were mistaken.

that his opinions respecting several material branches of the naval service are directly adverse to those which we have ever upheld, and which we continue to approve. I have written much more than I intended, but I have been led into some detail by the value I attach to your opinion. Mr. Pitt has, I conclude, made a communication to the King: I have said nothing to his Majesty on the subject, nor have I heard from Mr. Pitt since I saw him on Wednesday morning. He ought to know that I intend to ask permission to wait upon his Majesty at Windsor to-morrow, but I shall not send my letter till I go to town. * * * I will take my chance of finding you in St. James's Square, for five minutes, at twelve o'clock to-day. I am ever, my dear Lord, truly yours,

"SIDMOUTH."

To the copy of this letter his Lordship subsequently added the following explanation: —

"N.B. I might also have stated to Lord H. that I sought in vain for opportunities of explanation with Mr. Pitt, and that to the appointment of Sir C. M. I had made the strongest remonstrances; which, in conjunction with those Mr. Pitt received from other quarters, had, I hoped, induced him to lay aside all thoughts of it. "S."

The second letter is the one in which he communicated to his brother the circumstances under which he had been diverted from his purpose of immediate resignation.

"My dear Hiley, Richmond Park, April 28th, 1805.

"Matters have taken an unexpected turn since I last wrote to you. Mr. Pitt delayed making a communication to the King, and in consequence of a wish expressed by him to Lord Chatham, we met yesterday in Downing Street. After an hour and a half's conversation, he proposed to come to me at Richmond Park to-day, when we had another full and, upon the whole, satisfactory discussion. I have consented to make the experiment of continuing in office, upon being assured that there was, on his part, a cordial disposition to maintain with me an unqualified intercourse of confidence and friendship; that it was not capable of being affected, in the smallest

degree, by the prejudices and influence of others; that Lord Melville was no longer consulted on the conduct of public affairs, and that he had no share whatever in the appointment of Sir C. Middleton; that Sir C. Middleton's appointment was to be considered as temporary, and only to continue until a satisfactory arrangement could be made; that it was far from importing hostility to measures of reform; on the contrary, that it was Mr. Pitt's intention and determination to give to the public the full benefit of the reports of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry; and, finally, that every allowance would be made for the peculiar situation of my friends on many questions that might arise, and every consideration shown to their just and admitted pretensions. It was added, that if, with a view to my own credit and comfort, and to the influence which it might have upon my friends, I should prefer the office of Secretary of State to that which I now hold, an arrangement should be made for that purpose. We parted between four and five, and I am willing to hope that much good, both public and private, especially in relation to the King, may result from the agitation of the last ten or twelve days."

Thus happily terminated for the moment a misunderstanding which threatened very serious consequences; for his Lordship's resignation at that crisis, and during the sitting of parliament, would, not improbably, have led to a dissolution of the government. This settlement, therefore, was received with much satisfaction by his Lordship's numerous friends, who could not help feeling, that had a breach then taken place, it would have been founded, in public opinion, solely on a comparative estimate of the merits of Sir Charles Middleton and the noble Lord (Buckinghamshire) whose superior pretensions Lord Sidmouth considered as unfairly set aside; whereas, in reality, the difference on that point, so far from being the one cause of the separation, would only have been the last and finishing circumstance of many which had long been tending to the same result.

CHAPTER XXV.

1805, 1806.

Debates on the Irish Catholic Petition. Opinion of Lord Sidmouth. King's Message on Continental Alliances. Lord Sidmouth's Friends support the Prosecution of Lord Melville. Mr. Pitt's Conduct thereon. Former Vote reversed, and Impeachment substituted. Mr. Pitt's Displeasure with Messrs. Hiley Addington and Bond. Mr. Fox's Message to Lord Sidmouth. Dissatisfaction of the latter with Pitt. Their Conference. His Lordship resigns. His Account of the Transaction. Lord Buckinghamshire also resigns. His explanatory Letter. Approbation of Lord Sidmouth's Friends. Letter from Sir William Middleton. Remarks on his Lordship's second Resignation. Lord Sidmouth's serious Indisposition. Lord Nelson sails for the West Indies. His Letter to Lord Sidmouth. His return to England, and Meetings with Lord Sidmouth. Their last Interview. The Death of Lord Nelson. Lord Sidmouth's Sentiments on that Event. Illness of his Lordship's eldest Son. His early Promise. His Lordship's Letters to his Son at College. Effects of severe Study on Mr. Henry Addington's Health. Letter of Mr. Wilberforce. Visit of Condolence from Mr. Pitt — Their last Meeting. Letter from Mr. Le Mesurier. Origin of his Pamphlet. Lord Sidmouth visited by Messrs. Erskine, Sheridan, and Tierney. Letters from the King, Lord Ellenborough, and Colonel Taylor. Mr. Pitt's Continental Alliances. Ill Effects of this System. Capitulation of Ulm. His sanguine Spirit. His Letters to General Simcoe and his Brother. Mr. Hiley Addington to Lord Sidmouth. Lord Sidmouth to Mr. Carew. Return of Lord Wellesley. Illness of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Abbot's Diary. Bulletins from Bishop of Lincoln. Death of Mr. Pitt. Lord Sidmouth's Sentiments on Mr. Pitt's Death. Remarks on that Event.

The agreement by which the cabinet was now held together presented rather the appearance of a tem-

porary accommodation than of a permanent arrangement. Lord Sidmouth had told Mr. Pitt that "he regarded it only as an experiment;" and certainly whilst the latter, though unquestionably sincere at the moment, retained his unfortunate tendency to yield to the influence of others*, this was the best term by which it could be characterised. The first public event which engaged Lord Sidmouth's attention during the continuance of this truce was the consideration, for the first time since the Union, of the question between the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, which was brought before the House of Lords on the 10th of May, by Lord Grenville, in the shape of a petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland. "The Lords," observed Mr. Abbot in his diary, "debated the question, Whether or not the petition should be referred to a committee? until three in the morning, and then adjourned till Monday, when, after another prolonged discussion, they rejected the motion by 178 against 49. The Duke of Cumberland, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Redesdale, Lord Ellenborough, &c. &c. spoke against the claims, as inadmissible at any time." The opinion which Lord Sidmouth on this occasion first publicly expressed, was the same which he always retained, and invariably acted upon until the third reading of the Relief Bill in 1829, namely, "that he desired that all remaining restrictions on the religion of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, if any did remain,

* This was so evident to Mr. Wilberforce, that, at this very time, he recorded the following words in his diary:—"It is melancholy to see Pitt's excellent understanding so befooled by less worthy associates."

should be removed. He would also allow them a full community of civil rights with the rest of his Majesty's subjects; but never would he agree to place in their hands powers sufficient to subvert the constitution."

Mr. Fox's motion in the Commons, to the same purport, shared a similar fate on the following day, being rejected by a majority of 336 to 124. The danger, indeed, and impropriety of agitating the question at such a moment was so obvious, that many even of those who were favourably inclined towards it voted against it on this division.

Another occasion on which Lord Sidmouth expressed his sentiments in parliament at considerable length was on the 20th of June, when the Lords took into consideration a message from his Majesty, recommending parliament "to make provision for enabling his Majesty to form such continental connexions, and enter into such engagements, as the exigencies of affairs may require." In the debate which ensued, the policy of the peace of Amiens was arraigned, as if it had tended to deprive Great Britain of the benefit of all foreign alliances; his Lordship, therefore, fully exposed that fallacy, and at the same time proved the immense advantages derived from the treaty, as regarded both the increased productiveness of the revenue and the extraordinary unanimity with which the present war had been engaged in and supported. On the other subjects of discussion which arose in the progress of this session, Lord Sidmouth's friends voted for the government, with the single exception of the impeachment of Lord Melville. Upon that question, it will be remembered, it had been expressly agreed when Lord Sidmouth consented, at Mr. Pitt's

earnest request, to remain in the cabinet, that his Lordship's friends should be at full liberty to vote as they pleased, without the engagement which Mr. Pitt had made to appoint them to office being at all affected thereby. Accordingly, when, on the 11th of June, Mr. Whitbread moved the impeachment of Lord Melville on the charges contained in the Tenth Report of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, Lord Sidmouth's parliamentary friends, feeling that the case demanded investigation, voted in favour of an amendment proposed by one of their number, Mr. Bond, for a criminal prosecution by the Attorney General, which, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the Minister, was carried in a house of 467, by a majority of 9. The effects of this vote upon Mr. Pitt's conduct are thus described by Mr. Abbot in his journal for the 16th of June:—

"I brought Lord Sidmouth home from a dinner at Sir William Curtis's. The last week had been one of great discomfort between him and Mr. Pitt, who had desired to consider the proceedings upon Lord Melville's case as a government measure, and said, that *if Lord Sidmouth's friends took a different part from him, much as he desired to place them in high situations, it would then become impossible,* and his own sincerity would be suspected. He summoned a cabinet the day before Whitbread's motion, for the purpose of proposing his own line as a cabinet measure; but, upon Lord Sidmouth's stating firmly that his resignation must be the consequence, he gave that up. His Lordship told me he was determined not to vote with Fox, and equally decided upon the necessity of proceeding in Lord Melville's case. Since this division, they have met on terms of apparent civility, but there has been no free and cordial intercourse of confidence between them since Lord Sidmouth first joined the administration at Christmas last."

On the 25th of June a step was taken by Mr. Pitt and the friends of Lord Melville, which not only gave umbrage to the Addington party, but appears also to have offended a large proportion of the right thinking members of society. Lord Melville, it was understood, had in the first instance preferred a prosecution at law to an impeachment, but afterwards desired an impeachment; consequently, on the day above mentioned, as Mr. Abbot's diary informs us, "Mr. Leycester moved to proceed against his Lordship by impeachment, and to stay the proceedings by the Attorney General. Debate till two o'clock: carried by 166 to 143; the Addington, Fox, and Grenville parties voting against rescinding the former resolution. Thus 166, in a house of 309, rescinded a vote carried only a fortnight before by 238, in a house of 467; and this upon a notice not formally given till the preceding day."

On the 26th of June Mr. Whitbread carried up the impeachment to the House of Lords, and on the following day Lord Sidmouth communicated the subjoined particulars to his faithful chronicler, Mr. Abbot: —

"On the day before yesterday," he said, "he had held a conversation with Mr. Pitt at the Queen's House, the result of which was, that Mr. Pitt had thrown out difficulties about giving appointments to Bond and Hiley, and dwelt on the appearance of hostility and defiance shown in their speaking and voting against government. The King then saw Mr. Pitt, and afterwards Lord Sidmouth. His Majesty said Mr. Pitt had acquainted him, that Mr. Fox had declared his wish not to stand in the way of his friends forming part of any administration. The King told Lord Sidmouth that

he and Mr. Pitt should talk matters over together, and not have any go-betweens."

Lord Sidmouth immediately followed this truly sensible advice; for on the 28th he wrote a note to Mr. Pitt requesting to see him, which the latter answered on the 29th, by promising "to call on him at Richmond Park, a little before two, on Sunday the 30th."

The above traces of dissatisfaction were not unobserved by the Opposition; for at this period, as Lord Sidmouth informed his usual confidant, Mr. Abbot, "Mr. Fox sent him a message by Tierney, to the effect that it was a great misrepresentation of his sentiments to say that he had expressed any idea of excluding Lord Sidmouth from any administration on a broad basis."

That his Lordship's present situation had now become intolerable to him, is evident from the following manly sentiment extracted from a letter which he addressed to the Bishop of Gloucester on the 28th:— "I look back on the conduct of my friends during the present session with the greatest satisfaction. They have given all the support to government which consistency and a due regard to character would allow; but if unvarying and unqualified conformity, without reference to conscientious feelings or former conduct, is to be the indispensable condition by which a connexion with government is to be preserved, my separation from it is inevitable, and that at a period not very remote."

The appointed interview with Mr. Pitt on the 30th, as Lord Sidmouth informed his brother on the 1st of July, "produced no satisfactory result. We are to

meet again," the letter proceeds, "on Tuesday morning, when, if he persists, as I think he will, I shall proceed to Windsor, and offer my resignation to the King. * * * It is necessary that a state of things should no longer continue which is tormenting and disgraceful to all parties, and unprofitable, to say the least, to the public. I am very glad that my intended communication to Pitt has been anticipated by his own uncalled-for declaration. He said it was necessary that such conduct should be *marked* *, and the injustice, and I must add the arrogance, of that sentiment, convinced me that there was no hope of preserving the connexion, but by an implicit conformity little short of unconditional submission."

The interview alluded to above was postponed from the 2d to the 4th of July, in consequence of Mr. Pitt's having been confined on the former day "by a violent cold and rheumatism, which would also oblige him," he wrote, "to keep himself under Sir Walter's orders on the morrow."

In pursuance of this last arrangement, Lord Sidmouth saw Mr. Pitt on Thursday the 4th of July: unfortunately, however, the conference did not prove

* Mr. Pitt was wholly mistaken if he supposed that the exercise or denial of his patronage would affect the independence of the three friends of Lord Sidmouth, Messrs. Hiley Addington, Bond, and Bathurst, who were principally interested in this misunderstanding, for they all most handsomely withdrew their pretensions, and expressed an anxious desire that they might not be the occasion of separation. The first mentioned, indeed, went so far as to write to his brother in the following terms:—"As to any public situation, be the openings what they may, no consideration, short of an absolute injunction from you, should at present induce me to take one."

satisfactory, and he therefore, as he informed Mr. Bathurst on the following day, immediately afterwards "waited upon his Majesty at the Queen's Palace, and requested and received permission to retire from the office of President of the Council. This step," he proceeded, "under present circumstances (especially those which relate to the King) I would have avoided by any sacrifice but that of personal honour: there was, however, no alternative, and I am sure that Mr. Pitt expected and intended that such should be the result. We were together for more than an hour yesterday morning, and nothing occurred which could embitter our discussion. It was explicit and temperate on both sides; but it is remarkable that neither then nor on Sunday did he express any regret or offer any remonstrance in consequence of the intimation I gave him of the step which he compelled me to take. I told him that my friends had no wish by which I was embarrassed. The question was between him and me. I had urged nothing, but he had deliberately and repeatedly told me that nothing could be done; that the whole should be suspended till the next session, and that we should try in the mean time how we could go on together."

Shortly afterwards, his Lordship continued the narrative of events in letters to his brother and Mr. Bathurst, from which the following passages have been selected: —

"July 7th.

"I am just returned, my dear Hiley, from Windsor, where I had an audience of two hours, and every thing passed as I wished. * * * I saw Mr. Pitt yesterday, at Putney Heath, for half an hour. He took me by the hand, at part-

ing, with strong appearances of sensibility and affection; but his best dispositions were not a match for his infirmities, aided and assisted by ——, ——, and ——. This morning I received a note from him written and subscribed as usual.* Whilst matters were in suspense I consulted no one; but I have since had a great deal of satisfactory conversation with Lords Ellenborough, Powis, and Dunstanville, the Speaker, Bond, Dallas, Hobhouse, and others, all of whom expressed themselves exactly as I could have wished; and I am sure that our motives and conduct are well understood in the quarter where misrepresentation is likely to be most active."

In the letter to Mr. Bathurst, dated July 10th, he observed, —

"You will be glad to hear that there has been no acrimony in manner, look, or language, between me and any of those with whom I have communicated: on the contrary, from all my former colleagues I have met with every demonstration of kindness and regret. * * * The language to be held is, that, independently of other causes of dissatisfaction which could not fail to operate upon my mind, the manner in which Mr. Pitt had taken up the conduct of my friends, upon the late questions respecting Lord Melville, had necessarily led to my separation from the government.

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* This, it is believed, was the last note which his Lordship ever received from Mr. Pitt. Thus coldly terminated a correspondence which had been maintained with all the warmth of fraternal affection from their earliest years. Such is the precarious tenure of human friendship, even between the honourable, the great, and the good. Lord Sidmouth used frequently to relate the conversation between Mr. Pitt and himself at the interview alluded to above, of which a portion will now be given from Miss Addington's notes: — "On that occasion his Lordship asked whether there had been any thing in his conduct at any time inconsistent with what was due from him to Mr. Pitt; to which the latter, holding out his hand, replied, with tears in his eyes, 'Never: I have nothing to acknowledge from you but the most generous and honourable conduct, and I grieve that we are to part.'"

* * * You are right in supposing that my mind is very much relieved; it is, indeed, more at ease than it has been for a long time past. I have made the experiment, which was due to the King and the public, with the most anxious wishes for its success: when Mr. Pitt looks into his own breast, and at those by whom he is beset, he will find the true causes of its failure. I have abstained from any professions as to my future conduct; but I am sure it will be temperate." *

The only addition which will be made to the above copious extracts from Lord Sidmouth's letters, is the subjoined explanation which Lord Buckinghamshire (who resigned on the same day with his friend) gave of the grounds of their retirement: —

" My dear Disbrowe, Roehampton, July 5th, 1805.

" You will have heard of Lord Sidmouth's resignation yesterday, and probably of mine this morning; and it is

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* The author avails himself of this opportunity of inserting from his own note book the anecdote on this subject, which Lord Sidmouth narrated to the Rev. Horace Currie and himself, on the 5th of February, 1841: —

" When Pitt and I met to arrange our differences, I said to him that, as far as personal feelings were concerned, there was no difficulty; but as he would probably desire to uphold Lord Melville, how could I join the government when I was aware that his Lordship had declined to answer the questions put to him by the commissioners? This information surprised Pitt, who said he had not heard it before. Next day he informed me he had deeply reflected, and, notwithstanding this difficulty, still saw the importance of my joining the administration. This, therefore, I did, on the express understanding that certain of my friends should be included in the official arrangements, and also that they should be at liberty to vote as they pleased on the question respecting Lord Melville. When it came on, however, and my friends voted differently from Mr. Pitt, he told me it was impossible that they could be appointed to offices in consequence of the line they had taken on that occasion."

scarcely necessary for me to express to you the deep regret with which we have felt ourselves compelled to take this step. But the fact is, that Mr. Pitt left us no alternative but the surrender of our characters or our offices; and we thought the latter the most becoming sacrifice. Any accommodation that could have been suggested, consistently with our honour, we should, for reasons sufficiently obvious, most readily have acceded to; but the determination was taken to drive us from the government; and the question was, whether we should retire now with some degree of credit, or some time hence with disgrace. The particular mode adopted was a spontaneous intimation from Mr. Pitt to Lord Sidmouth, that the stipulations entered into with respect to his friends could not be carried into execution, on account of the conduct they had pursued upon Lord Melville's business. A reservation having originally been made, and repeatedly acquiesced in by Mr. Pitt, that Lord Sidmouth and his friends, notwithstanding their connexion with government, should be at liberty to act as they might judge right upon all questions arising out of the report of the naval commissioners, the declaration of an intention to punish them for the line they had pursued in communication with Lord Sidmouth could only be received by him as a dismissal from office. I have mentioned these circumstances, that you might be apprised of the real ground of our resignation, which, with all the powerful inducements for remaining in office, at a time like the present, that could not fail to operate upon our minds, I am persuaded you will be satisfied would not have been resorted to, had it not appeared to us absolutely unavoidable. Yours affectionately,

"BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

"To Colonel Disbrowe."

A rich influx of letters, as on former occasions, followed this event. All Lord Sidmouth's correspondents concurred in approving his conduct, and agreed both with Mr. T. G. Estcourt in lamenting Mr. Pitt's infatuation, in "not availing himself of the wise coun-

sels which the renewal of Lord Sidmouth's friendship secured to him," and with Mr. Blackburne in pronouncing, that "his Lordship's late connexion with administration was never of a nature to promise any real cordiality."

One of the supports of his own administration which Lord Sidmouth especially valued was the countenance he received from the county members. The following sentiments from Sir William Middleton, Bart., of Suffolk, may be regarded as a specimen of the estimation in which he was held by that justly respected portion of the gentlemen of England:—"I assure you I was amongst those friends who did not imagine that you and Mr. Pitt would act long in concert with each other. Your constitutional, economical, and temperate mode of conducting the affairs of the country, made the machine of the state go on smoothly and quietly, as if the parts all fitted with mechanical exactness, and required but little force to set it in motion; whereas the present lavish, jobbing, imperious system forces on the same machine, and racks and jars it so much that the consequences must be dreaded by all."

The circumstances attending Lord Sidmouth's present resignation have been so clearly explained in the correspondence, that additional remarks are scarcely required. Although caused by the same unfavourable influence which had produced the former separation, it was so free from exasperation, that, considering how near at hand was the unfortunate event of Mr. Pitt's death, it is highly probable, but for the rude shock of Lord Melville's impeachment, it would not have occurred at all. Though treated with a want

of attention which a high and honourable mind must have found it difficult to endure, Lord Sidmouth had not the same reason to complain of Mr. Pitt on this, as on the former occasion; and the reader must recently have observed circumstances in the conduct of both parties which manifested the revival of ancient feelings. The chief ground of complaint given by Mr. Pitt consisted in his telling Lord Sidmouth that his friends had excluded themselves from office by the vote they gave in Lord Melville's case, *after having previously agreed with his Lordship that they should be at liberty, without prejudice, to vote as they pleased.* Had he only silently deferred the fulfilment of his engagement for a time, or demurred when applied to by Lord Sidmouth, allowance would have been due for the state of his feelings; but *by raising the point himself*, when there was no idea of pressing it upon him, he created a grievance which, but for his own act, would not have existed, and which being raised, with a due regard for his own honour, Lord Sidmouth could not overlook.

On the whole, the position in which they now found themselves was far preferable to that in which they were left after their former rupture. A few months only elapsed ere one of them was visited by an afflicting dispensation, and the other stricken by a fatal malady; and it was then that the affectionate feelings of earlier days revived with all their force, showing, by the exercise of the most feeling and delicate attentions towards each other, how deeply seated was their ancient friendship; how thin, in reality, the veil of separation which recent circumstances had interposed.

His Lordship now resolved to keep aloof from party

engagements. "I have been sounded," he informed his brother, on the 19th of July, "by persons connected with the old opposition, who certainly prefer a connexion with me to one with the present government; but I have distinctly told them, that I will enter into no concert or co-operation, as it is termed, to subvert or distress the King's government. * * * My friends have shown the greatest attachment, and were, I think, at first, disposed to desperate revenge; but we must keep together, and maintain our character; and we should do neither, were we to act according to the immediate impulse given by recent circumstances."

Lord Sidmouth's letters throughout this summer contained occasional complaints of ill health; and at length, on the 7th of August, he informed his brother that he had consulted Clive, who, after "examining the whole region of the liver," had pronounced that he laboured under a decided and serious congestion of that organ. He therefore placed himself under Dr. Fraser, and, for many months, underwent the usual remedies for that disorder, and suffered from headaches and pain in the side to an extent which almost incapacitated him for business of any description. A letter which he received on the 13th of August from Lord Ellenborough contains the last allusion which is met with in the correspondence to the once-dreaded invasion, the apprehension of which had been gradually diminishing ever since the termination of the first year of the war. "We are in anxious expectation," his Lordship observes, "of the place and time, where and when, the threatened invasion may explode." Thanks to the gigantic preparations made

at the commencement of hostilities, that menace had long ceased to operate; and, consequently, notwithstanding parliament, in observance of the King's message of the 18th of June, 1805, had "made provision for enabling his Majesty to take measures for entering into such a concert with foreign powers as the exigencies of affairs might require," there existed no apprehension of immediate danger to justify any injudicious acceleration of such measures. Mr. Pitt, however, was already urging forward those premature efforts on the Continent, of which the bitter fruits were so speedily to appear, and was thereby departing, more and more, from the cautious and economical system of his predecessor.

Lord Sidmouth's attention was now attracted to a fresh subject of interest, namely, Lord Nelson's exciting pursuit of the Toulon fleet across the Atlantic, by the subjoined letter which that great man addressed to him on the 11th of May, when on the point of stretching westward from Cape St. Vincent: —

"My dear Lord,

"Notwithstanding my very indifferent state of health, I cannot forego the desire of getting, if possible, at the enemy, and therefore shall, this day, steer for the West Indies. My lot seems to have been hard, and the enemy most fortunate; but it may turn: patience and perseverance will do much. I shall see you very soon, and, I hope, a victor. That it shall be so, nothing shall be wanting on the part of, my dear Lord, your most faithful friend,

"Nelson and Bronte."

From the receipt of the above letter until the return of Nelson, Lord Sidmouth remained in a painful state of suspense on his heroic friend's account. He

knew that the combined fleet had proceeded to the West Indies, and that it greatly outnumbered the British squadron; the shock of a conflict, therefore, would be tremendous. At length advices arrived that the enemy was returning to Europe; and then it was that Lord Sidmouth and his brother appear to have discovered, with Admiral Collingwood, Napoleon's cherished secret, whereby he hoped to obtain a temporary superiority in the Channel, by ordering his fleets to draw their pursuers to a distance, and then to double back to Europe. For we find Mr. Hiley Addington agreeing with his brother, on the 11th of July, that "it was not improbable that this expedition, like that from Rochefort, was merely a feint, to induce us to detach largely both a naval and military force, that a blow might be attempted at home with a better chance of success."

Nelson's return to England in August put an end, for the present, to the hopes and fears of his friends. Lord Sidmouth first mentioned this event on the 20th of August, when he informed his brother, that he "should endeavour to see Lord Nelson at Merton on Wednesday, or in town on Thursday." His intention, however, was agreeably anticipated, as appears from the following note, which he addressed to the same party on the 24th: — "Lord Nelson surprised me yesterday in Clifford Street without my coat, just as I had undergone the operation of bleeding. He looked well, and we passed an hour together very comfortably. Our conversation will be renewed to-morrow, when he has promised to call here after church." Lord Sidmouth's serious indisposition, and Lord Nelson's numerous engagements, prevented their frequent

meetings: when, therefore, the departure of the latter to command the fleet off Cadiz approached, Lord Sidmouth addressed a note to him on the 8th of September, expressing "the great mortification it would be to him to miss the pleasure of seeing his Lordship again whilst he remained on shore, and offering to call on him at Merton on the following day, if his Lordship could not take Richmond Park on his way to town, which would not be a great deal out of his way." The reply, dated on the same day, was carefully cherished by Lord Sidmouth, as the last he ever received from the illustrious writer:—

"On Tuesday forenoon," (the 10th), his Lordship stated, "if superior powers do not prevent me, I will be in Richmond Park, and shall be happy in taking you by the hand, and to wish you a most perfect restoration to health. I am ever, my dear Lord, your most obliged and faithful friend,

"NELSON AND BRONTE."

To the foot of this note Lord Sidmouth has appended the following words:—"Lord Nelson came on that day, and passed some hours at Richmond Park. This was our last meeting." His Lordship was accustomed in after years to relate to his friends the interesting particulars of this interview. Amongst other things, Lord Nelson explained to him with his finger, on the little study table, the manner in which, should he be so fortunate as to meet the combined fleets, he purposed to attack them. "Rodney," he said, "broke the line in one point; I will break it in two. There," he said to Miss Halsted, whose pen has recorded the anecdote, "there is the table on which he drew the plan of the battle of Trafalgar but five

weeks before his death. It is strange that I should have used this valued relic for above thirty years, without having once thought of recording upon it a fact so interesting. Now," pointing to a brass plate inserted in the centre of the table, "I have perpetuated it by this brief record:—

"'On the 10th day of September, 1805, Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson described to Lord Sidmouth, upon this table, the manner in which he intended to engage the combined fleets of France and Spain, which he expected shortly to meet.

"'He stated, that he should attack them in two lines, led by himself and Admiral Collingwood; and felt confident that he should capture either their van and centre or their centre and rear. This he successfully effected, on the 21st of October following, in the glorious battle of Trafalgar.'"*

"Lord Nelson then asked Lord Sidmouth to hold his proxy in parliament; but the latter declined, observing that he might sometimes be compelled to oppose the government, which Lord Nelson, as an officer acting under them, had better not do. In reply, his Lordship mentioned the names of some peers who had applied for it; and added, that if Lord Sidmouth would not take it, he should not give it to any one else; and he did not."†

"At the close of the conversation, he said to the present Viscount Sidmouth, then a youth, 'Now, boy, man the boat!' alluding to his chaise which was in waiting. Just as he was entering it, Lord Ellenborough drove up. 'You must return for a few minutes,' said Lord Sidmouth, 'and speak to Lord Ellenborough.' The minutes proved an hour, at the end of which Lord Nelson proceeded to town. Alighting in Bond Street, he there met Mr. Sullivan: 'I have passed a couple

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* From Miss C. A. Halsted's Recollections of Conversations at Richmond Park in 1840.

† Notes by Sir H. Russell, Bart.

of hours,' said he, 'with Lord Sidmouth; but I shall never see him again; I have looked upon him for the last time.'" *

The intelligence which informed Lord Sidmouth of the fulfilment of the above prophetic expression was communicated to him by Lord Hawkesbury in the following note, dated November the 6th: —

"My dear Lord,

"I cannot resist the pleasure of informing you of the most glorious naval victory that ever was gained. On the 21st of October, Nelson engaged the combined fleet off Cadiz. He had twenty-seven sail; they had thirty-three: nineteen are taken, and one blown up; but, alas! poor Nelson is slain. Villeneuve is taken prisoner.

"Yours, HAWKESBURY."

In enclosing the above note to his brother, Lord Sidmouth observed, "I cannot so dishonour Nelson as to weep over him. He has left a name the most splendid in our annals." Writing on the same subject, a few days afterwards, to Mr. Bathurst, he said, "Of my friend Nelson, whom I truly loved and honoured, I can only say, 'Felix vitæ charitate; felix opportunitate mortis.' He has fallen as he must himself have wished. His loss I have not yet brought myself sufficiently to lament. On the contrary, I exult in the blaze of his descending glory, and in the conviction, that the sentiments, which not only his services, but the mode and 'opportunitas' of his death have excited, will for ever constitute a part of our strength."

It was not long, however, before his feelings of exultation in the hero subsided into those of sorrow for the man; for in the next letter to his brother he ob-

* Miss Halsted's Notes.

serves: — "I begin, now the feelings excited by the victory have somewhat subsided, to reflect with bitter sorrow on the loss of poor Nelson, to shudder at the chasm he has left, and to dwell on my last conversations with him." It was a severe disappointment to his Lordship to be prohibited, by his medical attendants, from accompanying the remains of the departed hero to their last resting-place, in St. Paul's Cathedral, on the 9th of January, 1806; but his health at that time was so precarious, that the effort would have been attended with too much risk. He, therefore, could only indulge his feelings in the manner described in the following lines to his brother: — "I rejoice that the weather has been fine on this sad but glorious day. I have given to the hero of it the tribute of solemn black. 'His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore.'"

Another cause of anxiety to Lord Sidmouth during this eventful year was the scandalous abuse and gross misrepresentation lavished upon him by the periodical press, in consequence of his resignation. As the actual circumstances relating to that event have been faithfully recorded in this work, it would be a waste of time and patience to introduce all the false and idle rumours of the day. One brief passage, selected from a letter addressed to Mr. Bathurst on the 14th of August, will suffice to show in what manner his Lordship regarded them: — "The language of the government papers is base and malignant, and that at a time when I was receiving every assurance of confidence and attachment. But, believe me, neither flattery, nor abuse, nor injustice, shall put me out of my course, which will be unbiassed by any considera-

tions but such as arise from a just regard to character, the feelings of the King, and the best view I can take of the real interests of the public. But I am writing largely, as my continuance in this busy scene is, I am convinced, very precarious."

All the trials, however, with which he was visited at this period were but light afflictions compared with the calamity which must now be related. The reader has observed frequent mention made of his Lordship's eldest son and namesake, as the party styled, by Sir John Macpherson, the "Youthful Secretary," and named more than once, by Lord Sidmouth to Mr. Pitt, as the sole depositary of the important letters passing between them.* Henry Addington was a youth of the brightest promise as regarded abilities, application, attainments, and conduct; of sensitive feelings, and of a bashful

* He was always a great favourite with Mr. Pitt, and was frequently indulged in the privilege of playing at chess with him. Many specimens have been preserved of the early ability of this remarkable child, from which the following piece has been selected, as having been peculiarly a favourite with his father, from whose lips it was taken down by the author:—

LINES WRITTEN IN JANUARY, 1799, BY HENRY ADDINGTON, AGED TWELVE YEARS.

"Rouse, Austria, rouse! is this a time to pause,
When anarchy extends her bloody hand
To overthrow your liberties and laws,
And hurl destruction on each coward land?
Is it a time thus passively to stand?
Shall Britain fight alone in this most glorious cause?
Can ye resist your bleeding country's call?
Nor lend assistance when the danger's near?
Does Gallic tyranny your hearts appal,
And strike your minds with unavailing fear?
Durst ye not stop it in its proud career?
Yes, Austria *shall* rise, and Gallic power shall fall."

and retiring spirit. He had been placed, in the first instance, at Ealing, under the care of his father's old master, Dr. Goodenough, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle, and thence was removed to Winchester School, where his progress fully justified the high expectations which had been formed of him. His successful career at that place is described in the following extracts from the letters of the Warden, and the respected head and second masters of the college, which are here inserted as the only remaining testimonies of so much early promise: —

"If the art of praising well," wrote Dr. Goddard to his father, "consists in dexterously throwing in a little shade, I am afraid, in your son's case, I shall discover great want of skill; for I can find no shade to relieve his bright parts; and this, you will recollect, is the character I have uniformly given him."

"When you talk"—are the words of Dr. Gabell to Mr. Addington, whilst yet Speaker—"of the favour and kindness shown to your son, allow me to say that neither favour nor kindness were the cause of his advancement. He is fighting his way up the school sword in hand; and has lately seized, by force of merit, what it was impossible for his masters to withhold from him without injustice. * * * If I had a son, and possessed, at the same time, the power of moulding his heart and his mind according to my wishes, I would choose for a pattern, in preference to all the boys I know, Henry Addington."

Next in order comes an extract from a letter of the Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Addington, dated June, 1802: —

"A gold medal is this day adjudged to Henry's English essay. This year the Oxford plan was spontaneously adopted by the boys themselves; so that the exercises appeared without names, having mottos only prefixed, and not in the hand-

writing of the authors. Till the moment, therefore, that he entered the room as the boy who claimed the motto 'Misceturque viris neque cernitur ulli,' we had not the smallest conception who was coming. On the superiority of his essay there was not a shadow of hesitation. The composition is exuberant in matter, and that matter well expressed and well arranged. The Latin verses, under the same motto, were so good, that they stood in competition, not with the first copy, but with the one next to it; and I do not know which I should prefer. With such abilities and such a disposition, how excellent a lad he is!"

As it was thought he had raised himself too high in the school for his age, he was removed from the college at sixteen; and together with Mr., now Sir Robert Inglis, M.P. for the University of Oxford, passed a year in the family, and under the instruction, of the good Bishop of Gloucester, who, on announcing to Lord Sidmouth his son's departure for Christchurch, Oxford, in October, 1803, used the following expressions: — "I must now say, 'Cæstus artemque repono;' and it is a singular circumstance that the last of my pupils, after an interval of thirty-two years, should be the son of the very person who was my first, and who, from the commencement of his tuition to the present moment, has been to me the dearest of friends, and the kindest of benefactors." At this period Mr. Addington was at the head of affairs, struggling, as best he could, against the menace of invasion, the machinations of party, and the alienation of Mr. Pitt; but these cares did not prevent him from watching his son's first entrance into this new world with paternal solicitude; and he even found time to indite the following admirable advice

for his guidance in the outset of his academical life: —

"Richmond Park, Oct. 8th, 1803.

"You are entering on a new and most important career. Proceed only, as you have hitherto done, with a fixed determination to make your duty, in the largest sense of that word, the rule of your conduct. You are going to a place of study, and not of amusement; but I am far from wishing you, on that account, to be recluse and unsocial: on the contrary, let your intercourse with the worthy and most cultivated members of your college and of the university be easy and unreserved; but avoid exclusive connexions, and never allow yourself to prefer the society of Wykehamists to that of persons, equally deserving, who were bred at Eton or Westminster. I have often cautioned you against those who, without a proper introduction, appear to court your acquaintance: of such persons you will probably meet with a few soon after your arrival. They are generally obliging, and ingratiating in their manners; but idle, and loose in their principles. Enter *at once* upon the plan of study recommended by your tutor, and begin with a regular attendance at lecture, hall, and *chapel*, and you will not be easily put out of your course. I will only add, that, as far as your conduct is concerned, I look forward with confidence; and I humbly pray to God to guide and protect you."

On the 21st of October in the succeeding year, these wise and affectionate counsels were thus repeated: —"You have returned, I am sure, with alacrity to your academical and collegiate pursuits. Proceed steadily and perseveringly, and 'may science guide you to the shrine of truth!' Remember, however, that there are truths of a more exalted nature, to which there is no guide but revealed religion. Accustom your mind to meditate on the Supreme Being, particularly on his omnipresence, and you will not

fail to find yourself strong against the temptations of the world."

Would that amidst his public occupations this anxious father could have found opportunities for inculcating many more of such precious lessons. From necessity, however, not choice, this promising youth, during the two years of his Oxford life, was left too much to his own guidance; and the consequence was, that, following his natural predilection for abstruse and laborious studies, he fatally overworked his intellectual powers before they had reached maturity. "He has plunged," his father wrote when the case became serious, "prematurely into studies which strain the mind by producing abstraction and laborious reflection and meditation. His constitutional bias has thus been encouraged instead of being gradually counteracted and corrected."

It was on the 19th of August, 1805, that his Lordship first mentioned to Mr. Bathurst "a fresh source of anxiety in the state of health and depression of spirits of poor Harry." For these symptoms change of air and scene was recommended, and the patient was accordingly removed on the 31st to Worthing, where his aunt Mrs. Goodenough was then residing. The sequel may be told in Lord Sidmouth's own words, addressed to his inquiring friend Lord Buckinghamshire, on the 19th of September: — "My eldest son is extremely ill. His complaint is a fever of the nervous kind, which appears to have been coming on for several months, attended with delirium. He went to Worthing, near three weeks ago, for change of air and scene; but I was called there by express last Thursday, and he is now under this roof, evidently

mending, though still in a distressing and precarious state." A few days afterwards the afflicted father, writing to his brother, described his son as being "grave, taciturn, and abstracted;" and although hopes were long indulged, and slight changes in the case experienced, from this state, in truth, he never rallied. The faculties of his mind continued apparently unimpaired; but either the will to exercise them was absent, or the power of doing so was withdrawn. He seemed to derive satisfaction from books and horse exercise, and manifested a consciousness of persons and events; but in all besides, his fine understanding, to use his father's expression, "remained locked up to a melancholy degree;" and until the period of his death, — from a casual attack of local inflammation, — in 1823, neither the sound of his voice, the expression of any desire or emotion, nor a single indication of pleasure or pain, broke the awful monotony of mental inaction. Such were the sad consequences of excessive application at too early a period of life; and they are here presented as a warning to those who would prematurely force the youthful mind into efforts beyond its strength.

Lord Sidmouth's disappointment, at seeing all his fondest hopes thus dashed to the ground, can be more readily conceived than described. He afterwards observed, that the period when his son's disorder was at its height was the most anxious one he had ever experienced; yet even at such a crisis could he express his resignation to his friend, Pole Carew, in the following terms: — "I grieve at the concluding sentence of your letter. We are most of us doomed to undergo severe trials, and *you* indeed have had a most

torturing share. I am, however, thoroughly convinced, from continued observation and reflection, that all which happens is under the special ordination of Divine Providence, and *that* for purposes the most wise and beneficent; and this I say, and strongly feel, under the pressure of the heaviest visitation with which it has ever pleased God to afflict me. A similar conviction must have been *your* only refuge and support under the calamities of the last year."

His Lordship derived from his friends, under this affliction, all the consolation which they were capable of affording, and amongst other marks of sympathy he received several kind letters of inquiry from Mr. Wilberforce, who, with his usual fervent piety, "besought that All-merciful Being, who can bring good out of evil, and without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground, to support him and Lady Sidmouth under every trial he may impose upon them." "I dare scarcely ask," he wrote some years afterwards, "how Harry is; but if you can send me any comfortable intelligence about him, it will indeed be welcome.

'O what a noble soul was there o'erthrown!'"

In another letter, dated "October 9th, 1805," Mr. Wilberforce attributed this inscrutable dispensation to a conjectural cause, which, whether well founded or not, evinces at least the very high opinion he had formed of the interesting invalid: — "I can perfectly enter," he says, "into your son's feelings, and can thoroughly understand how, to a pure and delicate mind, the currency so generally given in the world to false principles, and the acceptance and popularity

of bad characters, must be in the highest degree disgusting and discouraging: really we, who are so used to these exhibitions, can scarcely be adequate judges of the effect they might naturally produce on a susceptible nature, and a mind of purity and sensibility, especially when there has not been that larger view of life which never fails to show us that the success of the bad characters which the world is apt to admire is generally dearly purchased (to say nothing of a future state of retribution) by the loss of those sweeter and purer pleasures which the domestic relations impart, and which are only to be found in connection with peace and innocence."

Another mark of sympathy which must have afforded his Lordship much consolation, was shown by Mr. Pitt, who called at the Lodge, in Richmond Park, on the 26th of September; and after inquiring for his Lordship and Mr. Henry Addington, asked if the former was at home, but through an accidental error was not admitted. His Lordship therefore wrote to him on the following day to express his regret at the circumstance, and to assure him how happy he should be to see him, "if he would do him the favour of calling again any day in one of his rides." Guided by that kindly spirit which he invariably showed when influenced from within, Mr. Pitt complied with this request upon the 29th; and on the same day Lord Sidmouth gave the following account of that *their final interview* to Mr. Bathurst: — "Between ourselves, a dissolution is not intended, and it is probable that parliament will not meet till after Christmas. All this, you will be surprised to hear, I had from Pitt, who sat here near an hour this

morning. Our conversation was nearly engrossed by the state of my family, and the only public topics adverted to were the preparations on the Continent, and the state of his Majesty's health, the accounts of which are as good as possible. Pitt looked tolerably well, but had been otherwise."

During the whole of this trying autumn, Lord Sidmouth's own health remained in a critical, the public thought, an alarming state. That this was also his own opinion, is evident from several expressions in his confidential letters. It appears, indeed, from the subjoined observations addressed to him at this time by Mr. Le Mesurier, that his Lordship was preparing some explanation of his conduct, intended, it may be presumed, to be made public after his decease. The document, whatever it was, has not been preserved, if, indeed, it ever was completed; it is probable, however, that the manuscript pamphlet subsequently prepared by Mr. Le Mesurier, and enlarged by Lord Sidmouth himself, which is so frequently quoted in this work, originated in what now took place, since his Lordship is found informing his brother, early in 1806, that Le Mesurier was then "engaged upon his pamphlet."

"God forbid," writes Mr. Le Mesurier, "that the statement which you say is preparing, should be, as you fear, testamentary. The vindication of his public conduct no man can neglect, who has a due regard for truth; but I confess to you that I see so much of wrong judgment in the world — so much praise bestowed where it is not deserved, and so much withheld where it is due — every where, almost, such false views of things, so obscured or distorted by interest, prejudice, and a thousand miserable feelings — that I am sick of looking to fame, either present or posthumous, for myself

or my friends. I thank God, I can look to a better reward; and so, I trust, do you; and will act from a better motive — one which, whatever I may think of the world, will not let me neglect my duty, or relax my endeavours where they can be useful. I will, therefore, not despond; nor, I hope, will you."

It appears from the letter to Mr. Bathurst recently quoted, that Mr. Pitt had now entirely departed from the system of foreign policy pursued by his predecessor, and in the removal of the French army from its menacing position on the coast opposite to our own, was reaping the solitary advantage, if such it was, which he so dearly purchased by prematurely arousing the Continent. Whilst, then, England was anxiously awaiting intelligence of the result of this rash experiment, advantage will be taken of the brief respite to present to the reader, in the detached shape in which they are found, the gleanings of the autumnal correspondence. Many intimations are met with of the activity infused into party politics by the tottering condition of the government; and a general opinion is expressed that its fate depended on the fortunes of the continental alliance. Lord Sidmouth received several visits from parties connected with the Opposition: one of these he described to Lord Buckinghamshire, on the 19th of September, in the following terms: — "Tierney came here yesterday. No advances had then been made to Opposition. He told me that I must expect overtures from *all* quarters. I replied that I wished to be quiet. He said that might be, but it was impossible for me to remain so."

A few days before he had informed his brother of a similar visit from a member of the same body.

"Erskine called here yesterday. He had been at St. Anne's Hill on the preceding day. * * * I told him, that without fettering my parliamentary conduct, I should adhere to the King. There does not appear to be any approximation between contending parties."

On the 5th of October Lord Sidmouth informed his brother of a "most kind and friendly visit he had just received from the Dean of Christchurch. He came," he added, "from Bulstrode, where Windham called a few days ago. Windham spoke of Harry's state, and of my own health, with great feeling; but he also showed some sensibility at the account he had heard of Pitt's visit to me."

Of another semi-political visit which his Lordship received somewhat later in the autumn, he wrote the following account to his brother on the 12th of November: — "Your letter found me yesterday with Sheridan, who surprised me at five o'clock. He dined and stayed the night. He never pleased me so much. His tour into Scotland furnished a very pleasant topic; and he showed besides a friendly feeling which I shall never forget. Politics of course had a share, and all that passed was satisfactory. I told him distinctly that I would not *dabble*, and that my line was plain before me. He evidently came with the knowledge of the P., and returned fully convinced, I believe, that I had but one honourable course to pursue."

On the 6th of October Lord Sidmouth received a letter from Mr. Vansittart, who was at Weymouth, expressing a surmise that the King was anxious to ascertain "what line of conduct his Lordship and his friends would adopt at the meeting of parliament."

He added, that "his Majesty was very desirous of seeing Lord Sidmouth; and as he was now at Kew, he thought he should take an early opportunity of waiting upon him."

His Lordship had anticipated this advice by paying his respects to his Majesty on the preceding day. As he did not, however, request the honour of an audience, Colonel Taylor received the King's commands to reply to his inquiries, by giving a favourable report of his Majesty's sight, and "expressing his Majesty's regret at hearing that Lord Sidmouth had been so unwell, and his son so seriously ill."

Lord Sidmouth derived much comfort during the numerous trials of this year from the society of Lord Ellenborough, who then resided at Roehampton. His Lordship was now at Ramsgate, from whence he addressed to his friend the letters which have supplied the following extracts. After describing the embarkation, under his view, of the troops composing that ill-arranged expedition to the Weser, which had not yet reached its destination when the fate of the continental war was decided, his Lordship thus proceeds: —

"20th of October.

"I have just taken a ramble along the coast, and seen the great dyke, or canal, near Hythe, of which about fourteen miles are completed out of thirty-six. It will cost an enormous sum of money, and be, in my poor judgment, of no adequate use. An invading enemy will, by means of fascines, get over it in any part they please in a very short time. The martello towers may be of some use, but the expense of the various works, barracks, &c. &c. in every part of this county, is perfectly appalling. * * * The wanton waste of public money which presents itself to view in every direction

must soon undo us in point of finance, as some late measures have irretrievably done in point of fame.* I long to resume my personal communications with your Lordship, on the most critical and interesting situation of public concerns both at home and abroad. The gloom of the present moment is not illumined with a single ray of comfort. God send us a better fate than we, I fear, deserve!"

The reader has now reached the period when news of that first result of Mr. Pitt's fatal policy — the capitulation of Ulm — arrived in London. Lord Sidmouth had acted on the principle of keeping in reserve the armies of England, and husbanding her pecuniary resources, until her ancient allies on the Continent should have fully recruited their strength. Austria, he considered, had not yet attained to that condition. Her ambassador had assured him of her disposition to obey the summons of England; but added, that after her immense losses, like an exhausted giant, she required a long time to recover her strength.

Mr. Pitt's sanguine temperament led him to despise the caution of his predecessor, and to plunge headlong into a confederacy, "the failure of which," as Lord Sidmouth observed, "was always to have been

* The reader will recollect that neglect of providing these expensive means of defence constituted one of the leading charges against Mr. Addington's administration. His successors, therefore, although now the threat of invasion had *nearly*, and the apprehension of it *entirely*, subsided, felt it due to consistency, it may be supposed, to execute, at enormous expense, these *posthumous* memorials of their fears. Advantages certainly have resulted from them which were not anticipated by their projectors. The gallant coast guard, after their weary night watchings, obtain repose in the martello towers, and the proprietors of Romney Marsh find their land admirably drained by the canal.

expected, from the precipitancy with which it was forced into action." *

The first result was, to liberate the French army from the dilemma in which it was placed at Boulogne; and the second, now to be related, was the entire prostration of Austria at the feet of France.

The note in which his Lordship conveyed the intelligence to his brother is dated November 5th, only one day prior to that in which he communicated to the same party the death of Nelson. "The dreadful intelligence," he observes, "is at last confirmed. Mr. Walter, very attentively, sent a messenger to me yesterday with a copy of the *Times extraordinary*, which he published in the morning. I give both you and Wickham the greatest credit for the opinion you formed of the approaching disasters of the Austrian army, and agree with you in thinking, that the infatuation discovered by those who directed it has never been surpassed, and probably never equalled. The armament for the Weser, under General Don, has probably sailed. Another army, with a view to another object, is collecting: it is to be commanded by the Duke of York. The officers of the staff already known are the Duke of Cambridge, and, I believe, the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Chatham, Lord Rosslyn, and Sir John Moore. It is to consist of 45,000 men."

To add to Lord Sidmouth's anxiety, his son's state of health at this time became so rapidly worse, that he informed his brother, in reply to a kind offer to come to him, that "a few days must, he thought, be decisive. He must soon," he proceeds, "be much

* Notes to Le Mesurier.

better or much worse; and in the latter case your society would be inestimable to me. But I hope you may witness and share my joy and gratitude, instead of partaking in, and mitigating, my grief. But, from the bottom of my heart I say, God's will be done." Notwithstanding, however, these accumulated trials, such was the buoyancy of his spirits, that he declared, on the same occasion, "he would never banish hope from his view of any state of things, either public or domestic;" and under this feeling, in the very next letter, he "trusted that the Nelson of Austria might still be in existence, and might yet be the chief instrument of averting from it an ignominious peace, and of restoring the lost honours of its name."

The same dauntless resolution displayed itself in a letter which he addressed on the 6th of December to his early friend, General Simcoe: — "You were one of those to whom I looked, when in the government, with peculiar confidence, in the event of a vigorous application of a considerable portion of our disposable force. A special service was, you know, in contemplation, in the execution of which it was the particular wish of Lord Nelson to be joined with you; and I am sure you were well calculated to confer and act together. * * * In the midst of illness and affliction, I still indulge hopes that the honour of this country and the independence of Europe may yet be preserved. These, however, can only be realised by loftier views and higher feelings of public duty than appears to me to be in action at the present moment." *

* As this is the last mention which will be made in this work of General Simcoe, it may be mentioned here that he died at Exeter, whilst in command of the western district, in the month

Upon this last topic his Lordship explained himself more fully to Mr. Bathurst on the following day: —

"My dear Charles, Richmond Park, Dec. 7th, 1805.

"It is a great satisfaction to me on many accounts to find that the meeting of parliament is again postponed to the 21st of January. I much wish for the attendance of my friends in the early part of the session, and I believe it will be numerous: it is desirable to mark as distinctly as we can the line intended to be taken, which I am sure you will agree with me in thinking ought to be that of supporting a vigorous prosecution of the war. It will appear, I believe, that government have been both precipitate and remiss; but I shall not be disposed to seek grounds for cavil; but if the confederacy should, at the time of our meeting, be actively engaged in the pursuit of its declared objects, my sole wish will be to contribute as far as possible to its efficiency and ultimate success. For this purpose, however, a vigilant and strict harmony will be absolutely necessary, of which there is not, I fear, much indication at present. But before this reaches you, the die on the Continent may be cast. * * * The result of this unexampled crisis, whilst it fixes the doom of Europe will operate decisively on the narrower sphere of our domestic politics: if it be fortunate, no change will take place; if otherwise, Mr. Pitt could not, I think, stand his ground. For myself, I have determined to remain unpledged and uncommitted, to enter into no cabal, and not to *dabble* with either party. I can have no share in endeavouring to overturn a government, unless I am satisfied that there is something better to be substituted in its place; and on the other hand, an official re-union with Mr. Pitt (if practicable

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of October, 1806, without having had the opportunity of exercising, on a large scale and in active service, those qualifications for command which numerous friends besides Lord Sidmouth believed him to possess. His eldest son, a captain in the 48th regiment, who possessed much of his father's military ardour and ability, fell at Albuera.

at any time) must be felt to be impossible, whilst the same circumstances exist which produced the separation; and as to the Opposition, we have no reason to believe that the leading members of the different parts of which it is composed are agreed upon the great questions of peace and war, and continental connexions, or upon any point, but that of striving to outnumber the supporters of ministers, and to force themselves into the government, as was the case with the same persons, with Mr. Pitt at their head, in the spring of 1804. The King, I am sure, well knows that I am not to be induced to follow such an example as that of 1804, and Mr. Pitt is fully inclined to reckon upon what he also believes to be my determination, and to take all the benefit of it. But whilst I am resolved to shun any concert or connexion, the tendency of which would be to press upon the King's prerogative, to thwart his wishes, and to wound his feelings, I am not to be deterred, even by these considerations, from such a course as a conscientious and deliberate sense of public duty, and as a just regard for consistency and character, may appear to require. I am, however, writing in this strain whilst I have one arrow in my side, and another in my heart; but even under these circumstances, I am anxious to conceive and discharge correctly all my public duties. Adieu! With our kindest love to yourself, Charlotte, and all around you,

"I am ever your affectionate

"SIDMOUTH."

The above sentiments were penned during the interval between the arrival of the intelligence from Ulm and of that from Austerlitz. The letter in which Lord Sidmouth first mentioned this last crowning disaster to his brother is dated December 31st. "On the sad history of Austerlitz," he remarks, "I will not dwell. There is nothing belonging to it to break the gloom. Europe is France; at least the continental part of it deserves no other name. * * * In the management of some of the most material points, diplomatic and military, connected with the

confederacy, there has certainly been a total want of system. On these and other subjects, I must of course be anxious to converse with my friends."

Thus, amidst national calamity, domestic affliction, and personal indisposition, terminated what his Lordship truly styled, "the most eventful and distressing year of his whole life." The only consolatory circumstance was that, as he told Mr. Pole Carew, "by great care and perseverance, his own health was now wonderfully improved, so that Drs. Fraser and Chine no longer entertained any doubt of a perfect recovery."

On the 5th of January, in the new year, his Lordship opened his mind very freely to his brother on the calamitous state of affairs.

"The fatal intelligence," he says, "from the Continent, and the consequences to which it may lead, both at home and abroad, have not been five minutes together out of my thoughts since it reached me. A letter I have seen from a very respectable quarter, dated Troppau, December 15th, states, that 'the Emperor Alexander is completely disgusted, and gone to St. Petersburg.' Our calamities are such that French boasting cannot exaggerate them. At home we have every thing to hope that mere zeal, 'vis consilii expers,' can accomplish, and every thing to fear that can reasonably be apprehended from prodigality and want of system. As far as I can judge, public discontent is at its height. It is to be traced in every countenance; and the general opinion is, that, even if Pitt's state of health was not such as to render his continuance in office improbable, the government could not stand its ground. * * * As to myself, there are many considerations which must make me desirous of avoiding the restraints of official life, at least for the present. I need not, however, add, that let me but see an adequate occasion, and there is no sacrifice which could be honourably required that would not be readily made."

The letter in which Mr. Hiley Addington responded to his brother's sentiments at this crisis has been preserved, and supplies the following extracts: —

"'Oh, England,*
I see thy glory, like a shooting star,
Fall to the base earth from the firmament;
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,
Witnessing storms to come, woe, and unrest.'

"Such are the impressions under which I take up the pen, terrified by the absolute prostration of Europe, and the future prospects of this country. The more one looks at the present or anticipates the future, the less rational ground appears for comfort or hope. How must you bless yourself in having been driven from a cabinet, whose responsibility you must, to a certain degree, have shared, had you continued a member of it. Possibly, indeed, a disapprobation of its measures might have compelled you to retire, but too late to avoid some implication in the charge of misconduct and precipitancy. What is to be done, is a question more easy to put than to answer, either as to men or measures. Not all the powers of the press out of doors, or of eloquence within, can, after such vital reverses, sustain our present rulers, whose sheet-anchor was the continental confederacy. Nothing but the unpopularity of their principal opponents could delay for one hour their downfall. And how is that likely to operate? Mr. Fox has, by his last speech in the last session †, laid a solid foundation for a triumph, which never before fell to the lot of a leader of opposition. It was boldly prophetic, but all has been realised. This cannot fail to exalt the individual in the estimation of the public, who always judge from events. No rational man, however, would expect that Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville could act long together, unless some concilia-

* This word is substituted for Richard, to the second King of which name Shakspeare has applied this noble passage.

† In his reply to this letter, Lord Sidmouth observed—"I have read Fox's speech of the 13th of last June, and think it the soundest he has made since the beginning of the French revolution."

tory medium could be found, whose address might effect mutual concessions, and on whose integrity and fair dealing both could have an unbounded reliance. Of the serious impediments to the practicability of such a suggestion, I am fully aware. But I would be grateful to any reflecting man who could point out to me one other single source of hope to the country."

In a letter to Mr. Pole Carew, dated January 8th, Lord Sidmouth entered more fully into the state of domestic politics. "Most of my friends will attend the meeting of parliament. As to the conduct of ministers, it would be premature to express any opinion until an opportunity had been afforded for explanation; but I trust we shall agree in upholding the policy of continental connexion, however unadvisedly and unfortunately acted upon of late, and in resisting any manifestation of an over-anxiety for the restoration of peace. I have kept myself wholly uncommitted and unconnected, and shall take no step whatever but under a conscientious impulse of public duty, and a just regard for consistency and character. His Majesty's sight is, I fear, in such a state as to afford no prospect of recovery, and very little of material amendment. His health is very good."

Lord Sidmouth's next letter to his brother, dated January 14th, described his having had, on that and the preceding day, two long and most satisfactory interviews with Lord Wellesley, who had just returned from India. On this occasion he first alluded to the very unfavourable accounts of the health of Mr. Pitt, who had just returned to Putney from Bath, accompanied by Sir Walter Farquhar. On the 16th he informed Mr. Bathurst that the accounts of Pitt were melan-

choly, and that there were no hopes of his attendance at the opening of the session. Upon the same day he called on Mr. Abbot, "by appointment, and informed him that overtures had been indirectly made to him from Mr. Fox and his friends, but that he refused all confederacy. The King must have his free choice. If advised with, he should recommend a junction of all parties, for the sole purpose of saving the country, putting aside all questions of domestic policy, other than of finance and defence." Pursuing the Speaker's faithful record, we find that functionary writing of himself, that on the 18th, which was the Queen's birthday, he "dined in Downing Street, Mr. Pitt having particularly desired that the dinner might take place as usual. Canning said, it was the relapse of a single day which had reduced Mr. Pitt to the wreck he now was; and Sturges Bourne told him that on that day week Pitt had returned to Putney Heath. On the following day (Sunday), he had expressed a wish to go to Wilderness.* On Monday, he saw the ministers, and was all the worse for it. On Tuesday, he was out airing. On Wednesday and Thursday, he could neither rest nor keep any thing down. Friday, the same; but to-day he was, on the whole, better: such, however, was his debility that it was impossible for him to hear of business at present." It appears, then, that even Mr. Pitt's friends were not aware of the extremely dangerous state to which he was now reduced; and that Lord Sidmouth, though so near a neighbour, partook in the same error. Still, however,

* The seat of Marquis Camden.

such was his anxiety, that on the 17th he commenced a correspondence on the subject with the Bishop of Lincoln, who was attending upon the dying minister, and received from that prelate a series of four notes, the substance of which will now be given. In the first, dated January 17th, the Bishop "had the pleasure of stating that Mr. Pitt was rather better that day, having taken more nourishment, and with more appetite, than for several days." The report of the 19th merely "informed Lord Sidmouth that the physicians considered Mr. Pitt as nearly as possible in the same state as on the preceding day—certainly not worse;" but the next, dated "January 20th, 8 P.M.," was much more alarming. "The Bishop," it said, "was sorry to inform Lord Sidmouth that Mr. Pitt had been more unwell. That morning, in particular, the symptoms were considered as very unfavourable; but since that time he had taken full as much nourishment as usual. His stomach had been in a less irritable state; and upon the whole, Sir Walter Farquhar hoped that the next report would be more favourable." On the succeeding evening, the painful correspondence was concluded by the following note:—

"Wednesday evening, Jan. 22d, 40ms. past 7.

"My dear Lord,

"My report must be brief and melancholy. The symptoms are gradually growing worse, and indicate approaching, though perhaps not immediate, dissolution. My letter to Lord Chatham was in St. James's Square just before one, but he left it before your Lordship called there.

"Yours sincerely, G. LINCOLN."

Mr. Pitt expired at half-past four on Thursday morning, January 23d. The intelligence, so suddenly

communicated in the above note, produced upon Lord Sidmouth the effect it might be expected to produce on a generous and a Christian mind; namely, obliterating every recollection of recent coolness, and warmly reviving all the affectionate emotions of ancient friendship. Unable to restrain his feelings, he instantly expressed them to Mr. Bathurst in the following letter, dated "January 22d, at night: —

"I must see you, my dear Charles, as soon as you can come with perfect safety. Ere this the scene is probably closed at Putney Heath! In a note, written early this evening, the Bishop of Lincoln tells me that 'the symptoms indicate approaching dissolution.' May everlasting happiness await him! To me it is a comfort not to be expressed, that I have been enabled at this crisis to show, not merely attention, but the affection which has never been extinguished, and that all has been, in this respect, as I could have wished. It is also most gratifying to me to have stopped the intended proceeding of yesterday.* I have reason to know that my declaration that I would oppose the amendment, and the very numerous appearance of my friends, were the causes of its being abandoned. The behaviour of all the friends of poor Pitt, who deserve to be valued, indicates very satisfactorily what they think and feel. The situation of the country is most critical, and my own not unembarrassing. We must, if it be possible, have a strong and efficient government, and a weak opposition; and this can only be accomplished by combinations and arrangements which I certainly never could look to as objects of choice, though they may be called for by

* At the opening of the session on the preceding day, an amendment to the address had been prepared in each House, pledging parliament to inquire into the conduct of the government. Lord Sidmouth, however, disapproved of this step, and, as he here asserts, in consequence of his objections, it was relinquished. Mr. Bathurst had been detained in the country by indisposition.

public necessity. For my own part, I will neither, on the one hand, assist in propping a weak and incompetent government, nor will I have any share, on the other, in fettering the King's prerogative. In parliament and in the closet, I will offer the best advice I am capable of giving, but there must be no coercion. I look forward with great anxiety, not unmixed with apprehension."*

"Affectionately yours, S."

The death of Mr. Pitt constitutes an epoch in this biography. His destinies, indeed, were so interwoven with those of his friend, that in perusing the preceding portion of this work, the reader must almost have considered it a history of them both. It would be a presumptuous act to introduce into these pages any remark on the character of the deceased statesman, which did not bear immediate reference to him who is the subject of them. But regarding Mr. Pitt's conduct even in this restricted point of view, the Sidmouth papers contain what may be considered ample proof that all his spontaneous feelings were most friendly, just, and honourable. Whenever, in short, he exercised, uncontrolled, his natural generosity and that kindliness of disposition which so peculiarly belonged to him, his mind displayed its real nobility;

* On receiving the fatal intelligence, Lord Sidmouth immediately addressed a letter of condolence to Lord Chatham, from whom he received the following affectionate reply: —

"My dear Lord, St. James's Square, January 24th, 1806.

"Many thanks for your most friendly letter. I could not doubt of your feelings on the sad event which has taken place, or of your kind participation in mine. It is indeed a most heavy blow, and which it is not easy to bear up against. Whenever you come up to town it will be a very real comfort to me to see you.

"Believe me most truly, affectionately yours,

"CHATHAM."

and of this his behaviour towards Lord Sidmouth exhibited proofs even to the last, in the delight he showed at their reconciliation, in the emotion he could not conceal at their second separation, and in the two sympathising visits he paid on the illness of his Lordship and his son, at a period when he was himself almost worn down with sickness and anxiety.

These evidences of a noble and generous disposition scarcely leave room to doubt, that, had his invaluable life been prolonged, the present, like the former, difference would have proved of a temporary nature; and that both parties would, ere long, have been equally desirous to show that a friendship, founded alike on early attachment, mutual respect, and congenial sentiments, could only, in reality, be dissolved by the hand of death.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1806.

Position of Parties at Mr. Pitt's Death. The King sends to Lord Grenville. Lord Sidmouth receives Overtures from Lord Grenville. Writes to Mr. Bathurst and Lord De Dunstanville. Receives a Note from Mr. Fox. Accepts the Custody of the Privy Seal. Opinions of his Friends. Lord Bristol, Mr. Wilberforce, &c. &c. disapprove of Lord Ellenborough's Admission to the Cabinet — Debates and Divisions on the Question. Remarks on Lord Sidmouth's joining the Whigs — His Lordship's Satisfaction at the Conduct of his Colleagues — His Friends placed in Office. Mr. Fox moves a Vote of Approval of Lord St. Vincent's Naval Administration. Lord Grenville's Letter on the Slave Trade. Mr. Fox's Motion condemnatory of that Trade. Acquittal of Lord Melville. Conclusion of the Session. Illness of Mr. Fox — Lord Sidmouth's last Interview with that Statesman. His Letter to his Brother on the Death of Mr. Fox. His Recollections of Mr. Fox. The new Arrangements occasioned by Mr. Fox's Death — Lord Sidmouth becomes President of the Council. Dissolution of Parliament. Infatuated Conduct of Prussia. His Lordship's Reflections on the Destruction of that Monarchy. He resigns the Command of the Woodley Cavalry, and receives a Farewell Address from that Corps. Mr. Hatsell's Advice to him to write his Memoirs. Debate in Lords on Negotiations for Peace — Lord Sidmouth's Speech. His Speech on the Slave Trade. Act of Abolition passed, March 25th. Causes of the Dissolution of the Government in 1807. *Intended Extension of the Irish Act of* 1793 *to England. The King's Reluctance*

to the Measure. Minutes of Cabinet. The King misunderstands the Object of the Bill. Interview between the King and Lord Howick. The latter introduces the Bill. Lord Sidmouth offers his Resignation — Not accepted. The King's Surprise, and Disapproval of the Measure of his Ministers, who withdraw the Bill. Dissolution of the Government. Lord Grenville's Approbation of Lord Sidmouth's Conduct. New Ministry — Lord Sidmouth not included. The King's Letter of Approbation to Lord Sidmouth. His Lordship writes to Lord Chatham. His Speech in the House of Lords, April 13th. Concluding Reflections.

Mr. Pitt's relinquishment of the government, in 1801, had placed Lord Sidmouth in an embarrassing position, from which his Lordship was not extricated even by the death of that great statesman. On the contrary, such was the crisis of affairs, that, notwithstanding his own earnest desire to remain in retirement, he soon found himself compelled, as well by a sense of duty to his King and country, as by the almost universal opinion of the leading politicians, to listen to overtures from those who endeavoured to form a coalesced cabinet sufficiently powerful to afford a hope of extricating the country from the immediate dangers which surrounded it. The existing government, deprived, by long indisposition, of the full benefit of its presiding mind, had so fatally precipitated continental affairs, and so wasted the pecuniary resources provided by their predecessors for the defence of the country, that it no longer retained the confidence either of parliament or of the public. On Lord Hawkesbury, therefore, declining to form an administration, the King had no resource but to send to Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, which his Majesty

accordingly did on the 26th of January. Lord Sidmouth at that time possessed much influence over the opinions of about forty or fifty parliamentary friends, who constituted a species of armed neutrality far too powerful to be safely overlooked; he was understood also to enjoy the favour and confidence of the King, and to be faithfully devoted to his Majesty's interests. All parties, therefore, looked to him and his adherents as necessary ingredients of any new ministry that might be formed; and as early as the 23d of January, Mr. Sheridan told him by note, that "he had been *commanded* to have a confidential communication with him, and requested permission to wait upon him at Richmond Park for that purpose."

The quarter from whence the above command emanated was indicated in the following extract from a letter which Lord St. Vincent addressed to Lord Sidmouth on the 25th of January: — "The Prince of Wales came to me at five o'clock, while I was dressing, and desired I would lose no time in giving you information that the ministry was entirely broken up, and that the King meant to send for Lord Grenville. * * * From all that passed, it appears your moderation has produced a good effect upon the new and old Opposition, amongst whom Windham is the most violent." The next morning, January 26th, Mr. Sheridan was again commanded to write, to appoint an interview. Two other notes shortly afterwards arrived from the same party, in the last of which, dated January 29th, he stated, "that he had something to communicate to Lord Sidmouth from the Prince and Mr. Fox." It does not appear what progress, if any, was made in the negotiation through the medium

of Mr. Sheridan; but the first direct communication from Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox was received by Lord Sidmouth on the 29th, as he, on the same day, informed Mr. Pole Carew in the following words: —

"In consequence of a note received this morning from Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, I am to see them to-day; but a connexion with them will not result from it unless I have a perfect conviction that it would be advantageous to the country, and honourable to myself."

Lord Sidmouth had gone to town on the 26th for five days, during which period the necessary arrangements were made for his taking a seat in the new cabinet. On Friday, the 31st, his Lordship returned to Richmond Park, and wrote the following account of the negotiation to Mr. Bathurst: —

"My dear Charles, Richmond Park, Jan. 31st, 1806.

"I came here this evening, after having passed five days in town. The state of parties and of the country has, for a considerable time, been such as to convince me that if properly called upon, and after satisfactory explanations, I could not be justified in refusing to form part of an administration upon a comprehensive basis. Hiley has, I believe, explained to you how and by whom the overture was made to me.* Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox were nearly inundated by the pretensions which poured in from their respective connexions; and I was, therefore, as moderate as I could be without unbecoming concession or sacrifice. It is a great point, on all accounts, to carry Lord Ellenborough into the cabinet. I have laid a strong claim for you, which was readily admitted, to a situation of adequate importance whenever a vacancy may take place. For Hiley the joint paymastership is promised; and Vansittart is to return to his former station at

* From the Prince of Wales through Mr. Sheridan.

the Treasury (at his own request), if his Majesty will dispense with the punctilio arising from his rank as a privy counsellor, which I think very questionable.* Lord Buckinghamshire is to be joint postmaster, and Bond, if he pleases, judge advocate. The political arrangements, with one exception (I mean that of the war department), appear to me to be very good. The seals were offered to Lord Ellenborough and Sir James Mansfield, and declined by both. You will be very glad to hear that the King continues well and in calm spirits. There is an evident disposition to consult his wishes and attend to his feelings: for this reason the present Horse Guards' arrangements are not to be disturbed. I have had the pleasure, on this occasion, of experiencing the concurrence and zeal, not only of all my own friends, but of many independent men who cordially supported Mr. Pitt's government."

The following additional remarks are contained in a letter which his Lordship addressed, on the same day, to his friend Lord Dunstanville: —

"The strange state of parties has long convinced me that, without an union of two, it would be impossible to form a government adequate to the crisis; but the difficulty of accomplishing such an union appeared to me almost insurmountable. An administration founded on a junction between the remnant of Mr. Pitt's government and my friends would have been feeble; * * * and a government consisting of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, and their immediate connexions, would not, as I conceive, be acceptable to the King or the country. Under these circumstances there was only a choice of great difficulties, which his Majesty must have supposed were most likely to be diminished by sending for Lord Grenville, which he did by the advice of his present

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* The King *did* wave the objection, as Lord Grenville intimated to Lord Sidmouth on the 31st of January, in the following words: —"I mentioned the subject of Mr. Vansittart's situation to his Majesty. I look with much satisfaction to the prospect of having so able and useful an assistant."

servants. The King authorised Lord G. to form an administration, and instantly waved his objection to Mr. Fox. On Tuesday evening a note was written to me, in the names of Lord G. and Mr. F., desiring a conversation with me on the following day. The result is, that, with the entire concurrence of all my friends, I have consented that my name shall be submitted to his Majesty for the office of Lord Privy Seal. * * * It seems to me to be indispensable, at the present moment, that we should have a strong government and a weak opposition; and I have thought it incumbent on me to lend my assistance to the attainment of that object in the only way which circumstances could admit of."

His Lordship returned to town on the 2d of February, where he found the following note from Mr. Fox:—

"My dear Lord,

"I waited upon you last night to acquaint you with the failure of our proposition, and should have sent to Richmond for that purpose this morning, if I had not understood from Mr. Sheridan that you were to be in town. I will wait on you, at any hour that may be convenient to your Lordship, to explain the circumstances to you, provided that hour be later than half-past twelve. I am, my dear Lord, yours ever,

"C. J. Fox.

"Arlington Street, Sunday morning."

The failure here alluded to is believed to have related to a paper containing a general view of the proposed measures of the new government, which Lord Grenville submitted to the King on the 1st of February, and which opened the question, whether the administration of the army should, as his Majesty expected, be under the immediate control of the Crown, through the Commander-in-chief, or whether it should be subject, like the other departments, to the interference

of the ministry. This led to a temporary interruption of the arrangements; but on the following day Lord Grenville presented a minute to the King, proposing that "no changes in the government of the army should be effected without his Majesty's approbation *," which, as his Lordship informed Lord Sidmouth in the subjoined note, completely removed the difficulty: —

"My dear Lord, Camelford House, Feb. 3d, 1806.

"As soon as his Majesty had heard the paper read, he expressed himself entirely satisfied, and directed that there should be a council at the Queen's House at two on Wednesday next, to swear in Lord Spencer and Windham. †

"Ever yours, G."

The little that still remains unrecorded of this transaction shall be described in the words of Mr. Abbot's diary for February the 4th: — "Lord Sidmouth came to relate the substance of what Bond and Vansittart had communicated about arrangements. Also additionally, that he had been much pressed to be Lord President, which he had declined on account of health, and *from wishing not to excite jealousy by very frequent intercourse with the King.* That he had given express notice to Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, that whether in the present or future reign, in or out of office, he would ever resist to his utmost the Catholic question. That Lord G. and Mr. F. had required the military measures to be wholly under the direction

* Annual Register for 1806, p. 26.

† As Secretaries of State for the Home and War Departments. On Wednesday, the 5th of February, many of the new ministers, including Lord Sidmouth, took the oaths of office.

of the cabinet, and to the King's apprehensions for the Duke of York, they had answered that nothing would be done that was not previously submitted to his Majesty for his approbation, with which the King was satisfied."

The customary augmentation of letters followed the announcement of Lord Sidmouth's return to office. The great body of his friends, including Earl Powis, the Earl of Buchan, Sir Robert Salisbury, Sir William Drummond, Bishop Huntingford, Sir Edward Littlehales, and many others, warmly approved of his introduction into the cabinet, and regarded it as a subject of satisfaction to the King, and a pledge of the moderate and constitutional principles on which the government would be conducted. Two of his correspondents, however, Lord de Dunstanville and Lord Rous, in very friendly and delicate terms, expressed their regret at the step which had been taken. The former "confessed that he could not feel sanguine respecting the measures likely to be adopted, and should have greatly preferred an administration composed of men of inferior talents united in some common principle, to that constellation of great men who seemed to have no bond of union." The latter nobleman jocularly remarked, that "Lord Sidmouth, with Lord Ellenborough by his side, put him in mind of a faithful old steward with his mastiff, watching new servants, lest they should have some evil designs against the old family mansion. "Two other correspondents, the Marquis of Bristol and Mr. Wilberforce, remonstrated, but in very honourable and courteous terms, against the admission of Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough into the cabinet, whilst the remainder maintained an in-

telligible silence on that question, with the exception of Lord Powis, who approved of it, and termed the debates on the subject "a complete triumph." It must indeed be admitted that, although this step was perfectly legal, it still was one of very doubtful propriety*, and that public opinion, both at the time and subsequently, coincided with the following judicious and patriotic remark in Lord Bristol's letter:—"I have always considered the act, which passed in the beginning of this reign, for securing to the judges their offices for life, as one of the most valuable acquisitions which the constitution has made since the revolution; but I am clear that this most wise provision would be rendered wholly nugatory, if it should become usual to confer on judges situations of profit or of power at the pleasure of the Crown." So deeply indeed did that respected nobleman feel the inexpediency of thus "uniting the provinces of a judge and

* Mr. Wilberforce, in his diary for the 13th February, 1806, mentions a circumstance which goes far to exonerate Lord Sidmouth from any blame in this transaction; namely, that his Lordship would have had Lord Buckinghamshire, but the Opposition said they had friends of equal or superior pretensions who in that case must be brought forward."— *Life*, vol. iii. p. 256. This shows that his Lordship, having attempted, in vain, the only alternative in his power, was reduced to the necessity either of introducing the Chief Justice into the cabinet, of taking his seat singly amongst ten of his recent opponents, or of allowing the King's government to be composed entirely of Whigs. The Right Hon. Charles Williams Wynne, who was Under Secretary of State at that time, recollects that it was then understood that Lord Buckinghamshire had been proposed and not accepted. This is confirmed by the present Lord Ellenborough, who, in his reply to the author's inquiry, obligingly stated that "he was before aware that Lord Sidmouth had first proposed Lord Buckinghamshire, but that Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville had objected."

a minister of state," that although he was then and through life one of Lord Sidmouth's most attached and valued friends, he could not refrain from bringing the question before the House of Lords. This he did in a very temperate and constitutional speech on the 3d of March, upon which day the subject was also discussed by the Commons. His Lordship, Lord Eldon, and others who engaged in the debate, admitted that the appointment was "legal and constitutional," and objected to it only on the ground of its "inexpediency;" and their main argument was founded on the possibility of a chief justice first ordering a prosecution by the Attorney General, as a member of government, and then trying the case as judge. To arguments of this nature, Lord Sidmouth, Mr. Fox, and other speakers replied, that they were rather theoretical than practical, and that a chief justice had an easy mode of escaping such difficulties, in case of their occurring, by abstaining from attendance at the cabinet, at the court of King's Bench, or at both. They then clearly established the legality of the practice by the precedent of that great lawyer, Lord Mansfield, who had occupied the two positions conjointly for several years. They drew also the same conclusion from the established practice of admitting chief justices to the office of privy counsellors, as, to use Mr. Fox's words, the cabinet itself is only "that part of the privy council which his Majesty thinks proper habitually to consult."* They, moreover, justified the act by instancing the lord chan-

* Speech of Mr. Fox, who argued very fully, "that the British constitution does not recognise any such institution as a cabinet council."— *Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates*, vol. vi. p. 308.

cellors of England, who were recognised by the constitution as *ex officio* members of the cabinet; and although this was not precisely a parallel case, inasmuch as the Chancellor's legal duties had reference only to civil causes, still, as Lord Sidmouth in arguing this point contended, "it appeared to him that the situation of Lord Chancellor was much more dependent upon the Crown than that of Lord Chief Justice. The former could be removed at pleasure, the latter held his situation for life. Besides, the Chief Justice decided instantly the cases that came before him; there was no opportunity for private communications being made to influence his judgments. He was bound also to determine by a precise rule the *lex scripta*, whereas the Chancellor must decide, in a great measure, by the general principles of equity which were in his own breast. Regarding it, then, as a question of expediency, his Lordship contended, that the motion would only tend to preclude his Majesty from calling to his councils men of great abilities, and to diminish the number of those who might reasonably be looked to for advice and assistance."

These reasons prevailed in parliament, the motion having been negatived in the Lords without a division, and in the Commons by a majority of 222 to 64.

The public, however, were dissatisfied with this decision, which they considered inconsistent with the spirit, if accordant with the letter, of the law. The precedent, therefore, has never been, nor is it likely to be, followed; and thus the result of the discussion was, to establish a new point of constitutional practice. Lord Sidmouth readily shared with his friend Lord Ellenborough and the government the full odium

of the measure; in fact, he never could see its impropriety: and although he justly appreciated the motives of Lord Bristol, who stated his objections with so much moderation as to retain the friendship of one of the parties affected by his motion, and to receive the thanks of the other, still he attributed, in other instances, the unexpected importance attached to this question chiefly to party motives. The subjoined note, in which he informed Lord Ellenborough of the result of the debate, shows how little he felt in need of apology or justification.* Instead, therefore, of attempting any defence of his conduct, a simple explanation respecting it, of which the substance is gathered from one of his Lordship's surviving friends, Lord Bexley, who himself held office under this administration, will here be presented. When, contrary to his inclinations, Lord Sidmouth yielded to the invitation to join the administration of the Talents, he was naturally anxious to introduce some of his immediate friends into the cabinet; that, through their assistance, his opinions might have there a proper degree of weight. Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, however, thought themselves each entitled to a preponderance, and had, consequently, agreed between them upon such a list as would reserve but one cabinet appointment for Lord Sidmouth and his party. His Lordship, though "desirous to be as moderate as

* "Clifford Street, Tuesday morning, half-past one.

"My dear Lord,

"I cannot forbear sending you three lines, to say that the debate went off *most* satisfactorily, and ended without a division. The question was hunted down, and the objections to your cabinet situation are dead and buried. Ever yours,

"SIDMOUTH."

possible," naturally hesitated to accept office upon these terms, whilst Lord Grenville strongly objected to increase the number of the cabinet, which already contained all the ministers that usually belonged to it. The idea, then, occurred of adding Lord Ellenborough as a member of the cabinet, without his holding any of the usual offices. The objection that this was incompatible with his judicial situation was, of course, discussed; but as a precedent was found in the case of Lord Mansfield, and as Lord Ellenborough fully acquiesced, this plan was finally adopted. Whatever may have been the reasons for Lord Buckinghamshire's exclusion on this occasion, his Lordship admitted their validity in the following note to Lord Sidmouth, dated February 1st: —

"I write a line to say, that, after an evening's quiet consideration of all that has been passing, I consider the nomination of Lord Ellenborough to the cabinet as calculated to answer every essential purpose, with reference to the influence you may be supposed to possess, that could have been expected from my being placed there without an efficient office; and, consequently, that my mind upon that ground is quite reconciled to the arrangement. Yours, &c. &c.

"BUCKINGHAMSHIRE."

But although Lord Sidmouth ran counter to the general opinion, as subsequently expressed, in regard to this particular point, his conduct, in all other parts of the transaction, was entitled to high commendation. His acceptance of office was regarded, by right-thinking men, as a pledge that sound and safe measures would be pursued; and the voluntary sacrifice he made of his own political feelings tended to soften the asperities of party, and to reconcile both

the King and the people to the entire change which was taking place in the members of the government. "Your name," to quote the words of one of his independent supporters, Mr. Orchard, M. P., "adds much to the weight of the cabinet in the minds of the people, as they know that you will never support any administration whose system of government in any manner militates against the constitution either in Church or State." Such indeed was the position of parties at that moment, that if his Lordship had not, with his usual self-devotion, accepted Lord Grenville's invitation, it would have been nearly impossible to form any administration capable of carrying on the government.* "He must be blind to the state of parties in this country," wrote Bishop Huntingford on the 26th of January, "who does not see that neither you, nor any leader of Mr. Pitt's administration, nor Mr. Fox, or other chief man of his party, can possibly stand against two other parties combined, and in continual conflict with the governing power. Seeing this, I cannot forbear obtruding my earnest importunities that you would accede to no compromise which shall end in proscription, and that nothing may induce you to form an administration which does not embrace the strength of the three prevailing parties."

* In his notes to Mr. Le Mesurier's unpublished pamphlet, Lord Sidmouth has alluded to this difficulty in the following words:—"He" (meaning himself) "consented to form a part of the only government which could be constituted at that moment, and thus, as far as depended upon himself, endeavoured to obviate the difficulties and embarrassments occasioned by Mr. Pitt's death;—a step which, instead of being matter of surprise and censure, met with general approbation."

Such, then, were the circumstances under which Lord Sidmouth took his seat in the cabinet amongst those who, not two years before, had been his determined opponents. He was generally considered the King's friend, and this, as regarded personal devotion and attachment, he undoubtedly was; but it would have been a gross error to assert, that he exercised the slightest unconstitutional influence whatever, or was admitted by his Majesty to any private intercourse. It was chiefly, indeed, to prevent any suspicion of this nature from arising, that he had preferred the custody of the privy seal to the presidency of the council; and it so happened that, in consequence of the manner in which his resignation in the previous summer had been misrepresented to the King, his Lordship was, at that time, labouring under a partial interruption of the royal favour, which he did not fully regain until the latter end of the ensuing summer. His letters written at this period mention in approving terms the friendly and honourable treatment he experienced from his new colleagues, their freedom from narrow and party views, and their devotion to the public service. He appears to have been much consulted by Lord Grenville in the formation of the government, and several of his own friends were admitted to important offices.* The former assertion is not made without proof, for there exists a copy of an important letter on the subject of the legal

* Amongst the number were—Lord Ellenborough, a seat in the cabinet; Lord Buckinghamshire, Joint Postmaster General; Mr. Bathurst, Master of the Mint; Mr. Hiley Addington, a seat at the India Board; Mr. Bond, Judge Advocate; Mr. Vansittart, Secretary to the Treasury; Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Sargent, &c. &c.

arrangements addressed by him to Lord Grenville, which, however, from its confidential character, it is considered advisable not to publish. As Lord Sidmouth was not now chiefly responsible for the acts of government, only those subjects will be noticed in this work in which his Lordship was particularly interested. His integrity, candour, and obliging disposition soon placed him on the most agreeable footing with all his colleagues. With Lord Grenville he had been intimate in his youth. He and Mr. Windham* had long been acquainted as mutual friends both of Mr. Burke and Mr. Pitt; and, like the rest of mankind, he speedily became fascinated by Mr. Fox. He approved generally of the earlier measures of that administration, including, though with some exceptions, Mr. Windham's military plans. The parts which he especially applauded were, allowing recruits to enlist for a term of years instead of for life, and the general amelioration of the soldiers' position: that of which he disapproved was the slow and inefficient mode of recruiting, compared with the system which he had himself found so efficacious: this he attributed to the ministers having precluded themselves, by their

* Extract from a letter from Thomas Amyot, Esq., late private secretary to Mr. Windham, to the Dean of Norwich:—

"May 24th, 1845.

"I remember when Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Windham were colleagues in the Talents' cabinet, the latter said to me, with a smile, after a long conference with his Lordship, 'You see on what friendly terms Lord Sidmouth and I now are.' The question on which they at that time were on full agreement against the majority of the cabinet was, I believe, that of the Princess of Wales."

language, when in opposition, from pursuing any more stringent course.

In the progress of the session a circumstance occurred in the House of Commons which must have gratified Lord Sidmouth, by showing how little intrinsic importance even those who had charged his government with incompetency really attached to their own accusation; and was remarkable also for exhibiting the tendency of party politics to warp the judgment and affect the consistency of even the greatest statesmen. The reader cannot have forgotten the first overt proceedings of the coalition between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox on the 15th of March, 1804, when the former moved for an inquiry into the naval administration of the government, and the latter supported the motion with his vote. On the 14th of May, 1806, Mr. Jeffery, after repeating in the House of Commons the same charges which Mr. Pitt had preferred two years before, moved, amongst others, the following resolution: "That during the time Earl St. Vincent presided at the Admiralty, the royal navy was not maintained in a complete and efficient state."

When this motion had been negatived without a division, it was unanimously carried, on the motion of Mr. Fox himself, "That it appears, that the conduct of Earl St. Vincent, in his late naval administration, has added an additional lustre to his exalted character, and is entitled to the approbation of this House." Thus the First Lord of the Admiralty was applauded for the same proceedings on account of which the Prime Minister had been compelled to resign!

The first question on which Lord Sidmouth manifested any variation of opinion from that entertained by his colleagues was the slave trade. On that subject, which must have been an embarrassing one to so newly constituted a government, Lord Grenville explained his views to him in the following letter, dated —

"Downing Street, June 1st, 1806.

* * * * * *

"The subject on which I wished to converse with you is that of the farther steps to be taken on the business of the slave trade, which, I am confident you agree with me, ought to be considered as a matter involving the interest and character of the country, and on which its government is therefore bound to deliberate, and, if possible, to form an united and well-considered system of conduct. If I understand your sentiments on this subject rightly, as I think I do, you agree with me in the strong disapprobation of the nature of this trade, and in the earnest desire to see it put an end to; but you think the steps for that purpose should, on political considerations of the colonial and commercial interests of the country, be more gradual than I can bring myself to think they ought to be. You voted, I believe, not only for gradual abolition in general, but specifically for abolition in the shape in which that proposition was carried in the House of Commons, viz. abolition at a period now long since elapsed. Would it not, therefore, be easy to shape a proposition in which we should all concur? all except the very few in either House of parliament who now defend the slave trade on account of its own intrinsic merits. Suppose the House of Commons were to send us up a resolution that it is desirable to put an end to this practice by such steps, and in such time and manner, as shall be provided by the wisdom of parliament, on a due consideration of all the circumstances connected with that important question. I do not give you these words as correct, but merely as conveying the substance of the idea. Is not that a proposition which would carry with it the assent of all the opinions we should wish to conciliate

of every public man, indeed, with the very few exceptions I have already pointed at? After such a resolution, passed in the House of Lords, we might then employ part of the interval before the next session in shaping, by mutual accommodation, such a measure as would certainly fall short of my sanguine and impatient wishes to do this great good at the first possible moment, but as would, nevertheless, meet with my cheerful support, as being the best thing that may be practicable. We could, at the very opening of the next session, resume the subject, so as to put it out of the power of our opponents again to defeat us by delay; and we might look with sanguine hopes to the setting at rest a question, in the rejection of which persons feeling as Fox and I do never can acquiesce, and which it is nevertheless certainly desirable not to have perpetually agitated, either with a view to the harmony of this country or of the colonies. It would be premature here to enter into the different plans that have suggested themselves to my mind for a measure on this subject. That which I have always thought the best mode of gradual abolition, I still continue to look at with partiality: it is the imposing on slave ships, cleared out from British ports, a capitation tax proportioned to the number of slaves they carry, and gradually increasing this tax every year; say 10*l.* the first year, 20*l.* the second, and so on, till the increase of duty will at length operate as a total prohibition. * * * A separate consideration is that of Trinidad, which requires no parliamentary measure, and with respect to which, therefore, the whole responsibility of the slave trade rests on the cabinet—a dreadful responsibility to those who feel upon it as I do, and believe that the responsibility of public men in public stations is not confined to impeachments in *this* world.

"I have desired Fox to summon a cabinet for to-morrow on these subjects. Whatever we resolve on, the consideration of it must be speedy; for days and weeks are passing over us rapidly, and it will soon be too late in this session for any discussion whatever on such a subject.

"Ever, my dear Lord, most truly yours,

"GRENVILLE."

No copy of Lord Sidmouth's answer to this letter has been preserved; but on the 10th day of June Mr. Fox took the first step in carrying out the defined plan, by moving a resolution in the House of Commons in words closely corresponding with those used above by Lord Grenville.* In the course of his speech, which was almost the last he ever made, he spoke respectfully of Lord Sidmouth, as "one who, though he opposed the manner in which it was wished to obtain an abolition, yet, as to the principle, enforced as strongly and with as much feeling as any man, his utter detestation of it." In these words Mr. Fox showed that he perfectly understood the nature of his Lordship's objections to the measure. When conversing with him on the subject, only a few days before, he had said, "I see what you mean, Lord Sidmouth — you think that abolition is *not* abolition, and there is a good deal of truth in that."

That his Lordship's sentiments on this subject remained to the last unchanged, is evident from the annexed observations which he addressed on the 8th of February 1825 to the present writer, who had transmitted to him a letter from the admiral commanding in the West Indies, representing the undiminished activity and increased atrocity with which the importation of slaves from Africa was then being

* The words of the resolution were, that "This House, conceiving the African slave trade to be contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy, will, with all practicable expedition, proceed to take effectual measures for abolishing the said trade, in such manner, and at such period, as may be deemed advisable."

carried on under foreign flags: — "I thank you for Sir Lawrence Halsted's letter. It confirmed the opinion which I have always entertained on the subject, and which I have never abstained from avowing in parliament. * * * With me it was always a question of *practicability;* and much good might have been done by regulation on the coast of Africa, in the middle passage, and in the West Indies. But we have rashly taken the bull by the horns; and whilst the consequences have been most injurious to our colonies and ourselves, they have, in the same degree, been beneficial to the commerce, revenue, navigation, and maritime strength of our rivals in peace, and our enemies in war; and the mass of human wretchedness, as far as the slave trade itself is concerned, is not only not diminished, but augmented in its amount, and frightfully aggravated in its degree and character.

'Inani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,
Ultrà quàm satis est, virtutem qui petat ipsam.'"

Mr. Fox, who already felt the approach of his fatal malady, and had made an effort to attend on this occasion, enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his motion carried without a division. The same resolution was proposed by Lord Grenville to the House of Lords on the 24th, when Lord Sidmouth, who still thought that abolition, in the mode proposed, was impracticable, and objected therefore to excite hopes which could not be realised, voted in a minority of twenty against forty-one.

The only remaining question in which Lord Sidmouth took any particular interest, prior to the proro-

gation of parliament on the 23d of July, was the trial of Lord Melville, which terminated, on the 12th of June, in an acquittal. As this subject has long belonged to history, the only fact regarding it necessary to be recorded in this work is, that Lord Sidmouth voted against the noble defendant on five of the charges, and in his favour upon all the remainder.

On the conclusion of the parliamentary campaign, "which," he observed, "if not satisfactory in all respects, had been unattended with circumstances discreditable to parliament or harassing to the feelings of individuals," Lord Sidmouth resumed his correspondence with his brother, Mr. Bathurst, and others.

All his letters now indicated great anxiety respecting Mr. Fox, whose symptoms were those of decided dropsy. On the 26th of July Lord Sidmouth thus expressed himself on the subject to his brother: — "Fox's situation is, I fear, quite hopeless. His strength diminishes, and his bulk rather increases. The danger is not, however, supposed to be immediate." Two days afterwards, July 28th, his Lordship transmitted to the same party the following account of a visit he had that day paid to the invalid statesman: —

"After the cabinet was over, I called in the Stable Yard, St. James's, where I learnt that Fox was desirous of seeing me. This was about four o'clock. He was in bed, and I sat alone with him about ten minutes. He received me with great complacency and cordiality — I could almost say, affection; but perhaps I judged a little from my own sensations. 'Hei mihi, qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!' and yet my present impressions respecting him are not so

utterly hopeless as they were before I saw him. His colour is very bad; but his voice was clear, and he seemed less oppressed than he was four weeks ago. He shook me by the hand at parting, and said he hoped I would come again. Lord Holland's attentions are incessant; and, indeed, he has every proof of solicitude and ardent attachment from a multitude of friends."

In compliance with Mr. Fox's request, Lord Sidmouth soon afterwards called again, in the hope of obtaining admission; but the patient was then too ill to receive him. From this time, until the close of the scene, every letter contains feeling allusions to the poor sufferer's state, which was gradually becoming more and more desperate.

The document which next invites attention was written to Lord Sidmouth by Lord Ellenborough, whilst on his circuit, and was dated "Lincoln, July 30th, 1806:"—

"At this crisis," he observes, "the want of poor Fox's assistance, both in counsel and in debate in parliament, is a calamity of enormous magnitude on every public and on every private account. To prevent disunion amongst the members of the present cabinet is an object much more to be wished than probable to be attained in the event of his death. * * * If any one is likely to mediate between the different parties, and to conciliate them with effect, it is your Lordship. I should most seriously and deeply lament any change which would have the effect of depriving the country of Lord Howick's services, whose discharge of his duties in the naval department is deserving of the highest praise, and whose view of our public interests is, I think, very manly and sagacious, and whose disposition and feelings are much more temperate than I had supposed they would be."

The succeeding extract, from a note which Lord Sid-

mouth addressed to his brother on the 7th of August, confirms the statement recently made, that although his Lordship was styled "the King's friend," no unusual intimacy or private intercourse subsisted between his Majesty and himself during the continuance of the Talents' administration. The truth is, that not one letter passed, and very few interviews occurred, between them throughout that whole period. "Yesterday," he states, "I went to town, and attended a council at the Queen's House. Previous to the council I had a long audience, the effect of which has been to relieve my own mind, and, I am willing to believe, that of the King. Misconceptions have been done away. * * * Lord Grenville was very good-humoured. What you tell me of the volunteers I fully expected. They must have increased encouragement. At present they are in a state of suspended animation." On the 13th he could not help alluding to "the new era which would be occasioned by the loss of poor Fox; for he *was* lost to parliament, and, he feared, to the public also. This," he proceeded, "furnishes materials for anxious reflection, not only with reference to public interests, but to the state of parties and individuals also. The relation in which we stand to all foreign countries will be materially changed when he is no more; and his temper, fairness, and authority, were important ingredients in the composition of the government. We must, however, do our best, and hope for a blessing even on reduced means and imperfect endeavours." In his communication to Mr. Bathurst of the 6th of September he inserted the following approval of the conduct of his principal colleague: —

"You will be glad to hear that Lord Grenville has given me every reason to be completely satisfied. He is, I am sure, desirous of cultivating a friendship with me and all connected with me; and our intercourse is become perfectly confidential. Our political prospects have, thank God, brightened of late. Fresh accounts received to-day, from St. Petersburgh and Calabria, are highly satisfactory. I had, yesterday, from Captain Bulkeley, some interesting details of the recent operations in Calabria.* Not a British soldier was touched by a French bayonet. The value of this victory is not to be measured by local considerations: it will, I trust, not only lead other powers to place increased confidence in us, but teach them to acquire confidence in themselves. If this be the case, Great Britain may yet recover Europe by her example."

At length, on the 14th of September, his Lordship received the long-expected intelligence of Mr. Fox's death, which he immediately communicated to his brother in the following words: —

"My dear Hiley, Richmond Park, Sept. 14th, 1806.

"Poor Fox closed his career yesterday evening, and, I trust, is at peace. He suffered little, but was occasionally dejected: in general, however, he preserved his complacency, and smiled when any friend approached him, even when he could not converse: as late as Thursday, when he rallied considerably, he talked with Lord Holland and others very cheerfully; and, observing a servant in the room, he spoke in French. Prayers were read to him every day; and he frequently clasped his hands together, and showed strong signs of devotion. This is a soothing and gratifying circumstance. His last words were — 'I pity you!' looking at his wife: just before, he had said, 'I die happy.' Of his talents there can be but one opinion. His natural disposition deserved, I really believe, all that could be said in its favour. I never knew a man of more apparent sincerity; more free from ran-

* The battle of Maida.

cour, or even severity; and hardly any one so entirely devoid of affectation. His principles, unhappily, were not sufficiently fixed, and he was too easily led. The consequences of this event will be very embarrassing: with respect to his office, nothing is yet settled. * * * William * is a great comfort to me: he has a sweet temper, and shows talents. He returns to Westminster to-morrow; and, at his own earnest request, begins his preparation to stand out as a King's scholar. I hope he will succeed: at any rate, the attempt will produce application, and excite emulation.

"Affectionately yours, S."

The above sentiments, so unusual for one statesman to entertain for another to whom he had been so frequently opposed, were highly honourable to the characters of both parties. Mr. Fox's powers of attraction must have been extraordinary, indeed, to overcome, as they did, not only the feebler resistance of Lord Sidmouth's political prepossessions, but also the more deeply rooted predispositions which were believed to prevail in the royal mind. Yet that such was the case is unquestionable. "Little did I think," said his Majesty to Lord Sidmouth, at the first interview with which he honoured him after the fatal event — "little did I think that I should ever live to regret Mr. Fox's death." His Lordship used to remark, that "Mr. Fox was always peculiarly respectful and conciliatory in his manner towards the King, and most anxious to avoid every question which did not harmonise with his Majesty's conscientious feelings. In proof of this, he mentioned that Count Stahremberg said to Mr. Fox, when he first came into office, "Have you no difficulty respecting the Roman Catholic question?" To which

* The present Viscount Sidmouth.

he replied, "None at all; I am determined not to annoy my Sovereign by bringing it forward." * Lord Sidmouth justly considered Mr. Fox's death a public misfortune. It occurred at the moment when his extraordinary abilities were most required, and when he was employing them in the manner most beneficial to his country. The arena of political strife was a miserable preparative for a death-bed; yet he was hurried from one scene to the other with so little preparation or warning, that Lord Sidmouth, at his last visit, on the 28th of July, found him reading Virgil. It is gratifying to learn, from his Lordship's letter of the 14th of September, that the Book of Prayer, and, we may venture to infer, the Book of Life also, were afterwards substituted for the heathen classic; and that the dying statesman perceived the surpassing importance of a Christian preparation in time, let us humbly trust, to experience its benefits. Mr. Fox received, during his illness, all the sympathy which the utmost devotion of friendship could impart; and Lord Sidmouth particularly remarked, that "Lord Holland's attentions to his uncle were delightful." †

The death of Mr. Fox occasioned a necessity for various ministerial arrangements, which will now be described in the order in which Lord Sidmouth reported them to his usual correspondents — his brother and Mr. Bathurst: — "There are great difficulties,"

* These anecdotes were related to the author in May, 1842. In a letter addressed to the same party in December, 1822, his Lordship observed: — "Mr. Fox once told me that his brother, the general, advised him, when they were young, never to say *never*. This was good advice."

† His Lordship attended the funeral of Mr. Fox in Westminster Abbey, as a pall-bearer.

he told the former on the 18th of September, "in making the necessary arrangements. *It is possible* that my own situation may be changed. I have expressed my willingness to take the Home Secretaryship, if this will really accommodate government, but not otherwise; and my health tells me that I hazard a great deal in making this offer." Two days afterwards he wrote to say, that "no progress had as yet been made; but notwithstanding the difficulties, there was no want of fairness or cordiality in any quarter. He had reason to be quite satisfied with the confidence he had experienced from both parties."

On the 21st he addressed Mr. Hiley Addington in a more desponding tone: — "I now fear," he said, "that difficulties which I am not at liberty to particularise will not be surmounted. They might be so: but not only ambition and the love of power, but allowable, and even praiseworthy, feelings stand in the way. My own line of conduct is clear and settled. It will be governed solely by those considerations by which it has, I trust, always been influenced. Of the King and the country I cannot think but with grief almost approaching to despondency. The prospect abroad is brightened*; but it is very gloomy at home. My opinion of many public men is raised within the last six months; there is, however, little chance of bringing together a mass of efficiency adequate to the crisis. There are materials, but they will be so scattered as to be, if possible, worse than useless." A note on the following day

* By the refusal of the court of St Petersburgh to ratify the unauthorised treaty of the 20th of July, which M. D'Oubril, the Russian ambassador, had made at Paris.

communicated to the same party that "the arrangements were settled; that Bathurst was to have the Mint, and his Lordship to return to the Presidentship of the Council." The letter of the same date to Mr. Bathurst adds the following particulars: —

"My visit to Downing Street yesterday, I trust, was not useless. The difficulties have been surmounted: Lord Grenville's claims and conduct have been fair and moderate. Lord Howick, I know, is of that opinion, but he (Lord Howick) has been placed in a situation of extreme delicacy and difficulty. Mr. Fox's friends look to him to support their pretensions as individuals, and their importance as a party. He has shown no personal solicitude for change of situation or increase of power."

The bulletin to his brother of the succeeding day contained the following list of appointments: —

"Bathurst will have the Mint. The other arrangements submitted to the King are — Lord Howick, Foreign Office; Mr. T. Grenville, Admiralty; Lord Holland, Privy Seal; Mr. Tierney, Board of Control."

"I had an audience yesterday," was the intelligence conveyed to Mr. Bathurst on the 25th, "but am not to resign the Privy Seal and be declared President till Wednesday se'nnight, as Lord Holland cannot properly attend until after poor Fox's funeral. I rejoice at this arrangement, which, upon the whole, is the best that could have taken place, with a view to your personal comfort and my own. We shall set our horses together, and I shall enter on the judicial part of the duties of my office with greater confidence and satisfaction than I should otherwise feel. Windham has refused to go to the House of Lords. I am happy to say, most of the parties concerned are satisfied; but I understand that some others, whose hopes had been raised by the death of poor Fox, have betrayed their disappointment. As far as I can judge, the government is likely to be more consolidated than it has yet been: there is now something like unity of authority, and no jealousy in any quarter. * * * On public matters, there is

good reason to reflect with satisfaction and hope. If we have peace, you may be assured that it will be on terms the most honourable; if war, that it will be continued under circumstances the most promising. It grieves me, however, to think of the time, the money, the blood, the credit, and the large portion of Europe that has been lost."

The increasing influence of Lord Sidmouth, as displayed in these arrangements, was highly gratifying to his Lordship's parliamentary friends, one of whom, Sir James Graham, "trusted that nothing would, after Christmas, prevent himself and *a very numerous party of his Lordship's friends* from appearing in the House of Commons, and showing those who may oppose them that they continued the same steady united friends they had always been." An unexpected obstacle, however—but one which, although the present parliament had been called when he was himself prime minister, did not, it is believed, occasion any considerable diminution of his Lordship's parliamentary supporters—was speedily opposed to the fulfilment of Sir James's wish; for on the 23d of October the parliament was dissolved; a measure, in Lord Sidmouth's opinion, of very questionable policy. During the period which was occupied by the elections, the fitful gleam which had glanced upon continental affairs at the commencement of the autumn had been succeeded by the deepest gloom. Prussia, whose councils appear to have become infatuated, as if in retributive punishment of the pitiful and selfish policy she had so long pursued towards Great Britain and her allies, after withholding her assistance in the preceding year until Austria had been overwhelmed, now opposed herself single-handed to the gigantic

power of France, and was crushed with a rapidity which had almost the appearance of magic. The letter in which Lord Sidmouth, on the 25th of November, renewed an unusually long suspended intercourse with his brother, alludes despondingly to this event: —

"Every Hamburgh mail brings a cargo of fresh misery. Prussia is annihilated; 'sine nomine corpus.' Bonaparte has found full employment for Russia on the side of Turkey, whilst he is executing, without molestation, his projects of partition and spoliation, of pulling down and setting up, as suits the purposes of his gigantic and expanding ambition. The re-establishment of the kingdom of Poland is certainly one of his immediate objects; a thorn in the side of Russia, and a practicable breach in its frontier, and then

'Think nothing gain'd, he cries, till nought remain.
On Moscow's walls, till "*Gallic*" standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'

"Parliament will certainly proceed to business on the 18th. The election of Speaker will be on the 15th, when all the friends of government and Abbot ought to attend. There will be no adjournment except over Christmas-day."

On the 30th of November, his Lordship, writing to the same party, resumed the subject as follows: —

"I weep over what once was Europe, and begin to tremble for what is still Great Britain. It is not, however, from any doubt of our means to maintain our power and independence, but from an apprehension that some of them are either overlooked, misunderstood, or underrated by government.

'Toto certandum est animoque et corpore regni.'

"No time should be lost in giving fresh encouragement to the volunteers, and in resorting to the rejected measures of 1804 for the augmentation of the regular army. The new system has hitherto done nothing: it is not on that account

to be laid aside; but measures of certain and immediate efficacy should be adopted without delay. The revenue goes on prosperously. Three weeks ago Vansittart told me that the war taxes, proposed in 1803, were producing, at that time, 50,000*l.* per day. You remember when it was supposed, even by Pitt, to be very difficult to find taxes which would produce so much in a year. The string is, however, strained very tight, far more so than it need have been; but this is owing to the late administration: their prodigality has imposed great financial difficulties on their successors, which I cannot say they appear to me to lessen by an adequate economy. It is quite evident, that without the last addition to the property tax we might have been carrying on the war with a diminishing instead of an increasing debt."

It was seldom that Lord Sidmouth expressed his opinion so fully and freely on passing events, as when he suffered "his pen to run away with him" in the following letter which he addressed to Mr. Bathurst on the 2d of December:—

"My dear Charles,

* * * The old enemy has been troublesome of late; and having no confidence in medicine, I fight him with no other weapons but patience and temperance. I must acknowledge, too, that he has an ally in the present state of public affairs. For the first time in my life, I am alarmed for the safety of the country. With great talents, zeal, and industry, my colleagues are not likely to make the most of the abundant means of exertion which we possess, and particularly of those which are to be derived from the cordial co-operation of the great body of the people. Windham's prediction, too, that his military measures were not likely to have a *speedy* operation, has been completely verified; and yet there is still a repugnance, on account of past conduct in Opposition, to the only mode which affords a reasonable prospect of a rapid augmentation of our disposable force. We have, I believe, time enough before us; but after the tragedy on the Continent is completely performed, and the coasts, ports, naval craft, and

seamen of the northern part of Europe are nearly all in possession of our enemy, we ought to be strong indeed at home to contemplate his means of attack without dread of the consequences. That we *might* be so strong, I am perfectly convinced. * * * It is, however, a comfort to me to think that the present government has had no share in the recent disasters on the Continent; that their conduct towards the continental powers has been wise and temperate; and that the same description is applicable to the mode of managing the negotiation for peace. Upon the whole, I see no hope of bettering ourselves by a change of men; but I am sure there might be a most beneficial change of measures in some material points; and it is painful to be convinced, as I am decidedly, that the Continent has been lost by our precipitancy of last year; that, by prodigality, we have missed the inestimable advantage of carrying on the war with a diminishing, instead of an increasing debt, and that without the last addition to the property tax: that our army, on the other hand, is diminishing, by the rejection or neglect of those measures which necessarily tended to its augmentation; and that the volunteers are in danger of becoming a cumbrous mass without zeal, spirit, or discipline. You will not wonder that, recollecting how things actually were, with a presumptuous persuasion, possibly, as to the state in which they might have been, I am particularly hurt and harassed to see them as they are. To you I have been very unmerciful, but my pen has run away with me."

On the following day he expressed himself yet more decidedly in the subjoined extracts addressed to his brother: —

"The opinions I entertain may oblige me publicly to advert to past measures, and to such as the crisis calls for, with a freedom hardly consistent with my official connexion with the government, if efforts to produce a recurrence to the system of 1803 and 1804, and the adoption of additional means of exertion and security, should prove unsuccessful. Our military force, regulars, militia, and volunteers, are all diminished in numbers since the month of March: not that I think the

plan of raising men for a term of years has failed; on the contrary, I am convinced it will succeed; but it is too slow in its operation to be the only instrument of augmentation at such a crisis. I agree with you in thinking that we have time enough before us, but we must make the most of it."—To Mr. Bathurst he stated, on the 4th of December, "I have had a conversation to-day with Lord Grenville, and another with Lord Howick. It does not appear that any plan is thought of, or even intended, to augment the army, or re-animate the volunteers. If this seeming insensibility to the present state of things should continue, I shall feel it to be an indispensable duty to express my opinions in parliament with a freedom hardly consistent with an official situation. But I trust such a necessity will be prevented."

To add to the dangers of the country at this period, the United States of America took advantage of the occasion, to prefer claims which Lord Sidmouth thus alluded to in a letter which he addressed to Lord Ellenborough on the 11th of December: — "The negotiation with the American commissioners is in a state which gives me great uneasiness. There is a disposition to concession and compromise to which I will not be a party, and for which the dread of losing the American market does not afford a plausible reason, much less a sufficient excuse. I cannot consent that our rights are to be borne down, or bent and twisted, by American threats, even if recent circumstances did not render more strictness on our part indispensably necessary."

Parliament met on the 15th of December, when, upon the motion of Mr. Bathurst, seconded by Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Abbot was unanimously re-elected to the Speaker's chair.

A few days before that event, Lord Sidmouth had "paid a visit to Berkshire for the purpose of giving a

dinner to the corps of Woodley yeomanry, and of bidding them farewell." He had commanded that loyal and distinguished body from its formation in the year 1798; and it was with great reluctance that he now yielded to the pressure of numerous reasons, of which the state of his health and his removal into another county were the chief, and resigned the command. The corps had acquired under his Lordship's auspices a high character for discipline and efficiency, and were warmly attached to their commanding officer, to whom — in addition to a previous testimony of their regard in the shape of an elegant silver ornament for the table — they unanimously voted the following affectionate address: — "Resolved that Mr. Golding, the acting commandant, be desired to express to Lord Sidmouth, in the name of the whole corps, their extreme regret at his separation from them; the just sense they entertain of the benefit which they have received from his example, attention, and authority, since their first formation under his command; and their earnest wishes for the speedy restoration of his health, with a long enjoyment of public honours and domestic happiness."

The last letter of the year is one from Mr. Hatsell, in which he repeated the advice he had often before given to Lord Sidmouth, to record on paper the circumstances of his public life; and after quoting the passage from the preface to "the Commentary on the Psalms," in which Bishop Horne has so eloquently described the gratification resulting from systematic employment, observed, "This it is, to have the pleasure of a constant occupation." It must ever be the subject of regret, both to the writer and reader of this

work, that Lord Sidmouth did not follow the sound advice of his friend: but his Lordship always disliked and evaded the task; and, consequently, with the exception of the "Sidmouth papers," and a few very brief memoranda written on the backs of some of them, he has not left behind him a single journal, diary, or explanatory document of any kind, to assist in elucidating his eventful career.

The first occurrence which marked the commencement of the year 1807 was the debate in the House of Lords, on the 2d of January, respecting the unsuccessful result of the late negotiations for peace. Lord Sidmouth took a leading part in that discussion, so much so, indeed, that Mr. Pole Carew considered his speech to "have been the ablest and most satisfactory that was made on the subject in either House of parliament." The steps which the government had taken in the transaction received the approbation of both Houses: it was evident, indeed, that this attempt to put an end to the horrors of war, which was the last act of Mr. Fox's political life, was conducted with perfect good faith by the British cabinet. The question which next occupied the attention of the House of Lords was one which had now been agitated for twenty years — the abolition of the slave trade. Lord Grenville, to whom belongs the credit of having been the minister who brought this protracted question to a conclusion, introduced a bill for the purpose at the commencement of the session, and moved, on the 5th of February, that it should be read a second time. On this subject Lord Sidmouth had the misfortune to differ from many of his friends, and to pursue a line of conduct which subjected him to be

greatly misunderstood. It was not, however, from indifference to the sufferings of his fellow-creatures that he refused to join in the cry of abolition, but because he was thoroughly convinced that the measure proposed would not effect the intended object. The abolition which he advocated was one of a more gradual character, and to be preceded by the moral preparation of the negro character for the reception of freedom, and the improvement of their temporal condition. With these impressions, "he could not," as he stated in his place in parliament, "conscientiously, partake in the popularity of a measure from which so much good was anticipated, but from which, as he feared, nothing but evil was likely to result. He therefore felt it his duty to oppose the further progress of the bill, painful as it was to him to be obliged to differ from many of his friends on a subject which involved questions of justice and humanity. No one could be more anxious than himself utterly to extinguish a traffic which violated the first principles of natural liberty, and was accompanied by atrocities which outraged all the nobler feelings of our nature; but he did not think it possible that end could be accomplished by the measure proposed; whilst the attempt, under existing circumstances, could not be made without great detriment to the West India islands. Instead, therefore, of immediate abolition, he begged leave to suggest that the best mode of effecting the object which they all so much desired, would be to throw difficulties in the way of the trade, which may finally, and, he trusted, at no distant period, put an end to it altogether. With respect to the existing slave population of our West India colonies, he would recommend the measures which that

great man, Mr. Burke, advised for ameliorating their condition; namely, that churches should be built in all the islands for the benefit of the negroes, and that they should be instructed in the doctrine and morality of the Christian religion. He would, also, have them united by the ties of matrimony, as the first step towards civilisation, and the future improvement of their condition.* With these advantages, and the blessing of being protected by our laws, he thought the time was not far distant when their emancipation might, with propriety, take place."

Experience has now fully shown the correctness of Mr. Fox's remark, That there was much in Lord Sidmouth's observation—that abolition in parliamentary phraseology was not abolition in practice. At this moment, forty years after the act of abolition was passed, the horrid traffic is believed to be as flourishing as ever. Still, however, it may be questioned, whether Lord Sidmouth's disapproval of the hasty and violent manner in which the object was sought to be accomplished did not induce him to interfere too little with the abominable system then existing; whether his objections would not have equally applied to any plan which could have been proposed; and whether, finally, the cautious and gradual advances

* Another suggestion, mentioned in his correspondence with Bishop Huntingford, was, that the slave himself should be allowed to purchase his own freedom, by small degrees, out of the fruits of his industry. The following passage, extracted from a pamphlet on the slave trade, by M. Thorkelyn, a Dane, was also mentioned with approbation in the letters which passed between the same parties at an earlier period:—"Let all children of slaves born in a Christian country be free, and let them be educated at the public expense, as in the Foundling Hospital and the workhouses."

towards abolition which he recommended would have led, within a reasonable period, to any adjustment at all.

It must be admitted, that his Lordship's opinion on this question was at variance both with the popular voice, and with the authority of the leading statesmen of the day — Burke, Pitt, Fox, Lord Grenville, Lord Wellesley, Lord Howick, Lord Erskine, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Canning, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Brougham, and a host of distinguished men, who had all ranged themselves under the banners of Mr. Wilberforce. The numbers on the other side were but thirty-six in the Upper House, and sixteen in the Lower, amongst whom were the Duke of Clarence, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Eldon, and Mr. Windham. Thus supported and thus opposed, the bill passed with unusual facility through parliament; and Lord Grenville had the satisfaction to see it receive the royal assent on the 25th of March, the day of his own resignation of office.

A delicate and difficult subject, in which Lord Sidmouth felt compelled to take a conspicuous part, now presents itself — the consideration of the circumstances which led to the dissolution of Lord Grenville's administration. The information comprised in the Sidmouth papers on this question will now, for the following reasons, be somewhat fully disclosed. History requires of those who may possess the requisite information respecting any state affair of real importance, that they shall, at a suitable opportunity, and after a reasonable lapse of time, explain to the world the true nature of the transaction; and this, in fact, is only common justice to the characters of those who were engaged in it; for it rarely, if ever, happens, that

at the time when the event occurs it is possible for the Minister to disclose all the motives and causes upon which his conduct is founded. He must therefore stand especially in need of what the public is, in general, little disposed to bestow — its confidence and forbearance. In every proceeding of his government, also, he must expect, to a greater or less extent, to be misrepresented and misunderstood. Were it not, therefore, for an urgent feeling of public duty, and a lively expectation that eventual justice will be done to his motives and conduct, it would be difficult to conceive how any man who regarded his own reputation and peace of mind could undertake the ill-requited and thankless office of prime minister of this country. On the present occasion, however, in addition to what is due to individuals, there is another motive for revealing whatever information can be afforded respecting these transactions. In the answer, dated April the 8th, with which the King honoured an application from Lord Sidmouth, requesting permission to explain in parliament the circumstances which had occurred, his Majesty observed, that "he had no reason to regret disclosures, provided nothing but the truth were spoken; and that he fully authorised his Lordship to state publicly whatever may, in his opinion, tend to place the subject in its true light." Now it appears but reasonable to regard the permission so graciously conceded to Lord Sidmouth himself as applicable also to his Lordship's biographer. Thus sanctioned, then, the author will proceed with the subject, after impressing upon his reader's attention the following distinction upon which the whole affair eventually turned. The dis-

tinction is this: the Irish act of 1793 admitted Roman Catholics to official rank in the army, but with certain limitations. Had it been expressed in general terms, it would have admitted them to the most important situations; but it was not so expressed; and they who acceded to the limited concessions did not necessarily accede to unlimited ones. A more detailed explanation of this remark will immediately present itself. The measure we are now to consider originated in a laudable desire on the part of the government to excite amongst the Roman Catholics of Ireland an increased inclination to enter into the service of the crown, by enabling persons of that persuasion to hold commissions in the army and navy. An act had been passed in Ireland in 1793, admitting Roman Catholics to the rank of colonels in the army, including, of course, all corresponding and subordinate gradations; but as this act did not extend to Great Britain, much inconvenience arose in transferring Irish regiments to England, from the officers so transferred becoming subject to penalties for not having taken the oaths required by law.

Lord Grenville's object was the removal of this anomaly, which he purposed to effect by a clause in the Mutiny Bill; and in this he was cordially supported, it is believed, by all his colleagues. But in the act of 1793 Roman Catholics were specially excluded from the rank of commander-in-chief, master-general of the ordnance, and general of the staff; and it does not clearly appear, from Lord Grenville's and Lord Howick's explanatory speeches of the 26th of March*, whether this new measure was intended by

* Lord Howick published his speech in the form of a pamphlet.

them to include or to omit those exceptions. It is reasonable, indeed, to infer, from a passage in Lord Grenville's speech, that it was meant to retain them; for his Lordship states, that "the draft of the bill which was laid before his Majesty for his approval contained a recital of the Irish act, *with the restriction.*"* It was unfortunate that a point upon which so much depended should have been left in doubt; but whatever may have been the intention of the framers of the measure, certain it is that Lord Sidmouth, when he gave his consent to it, on the 9th of February, considered that it contained "no new concessions†," but was only an extension throughout Great Britain of those which had already been granted in Ireland by the act of 1793. The King, as it afterwards appeared, placed the same interpretation upon it; and even to that limited proposal, though recommended by a cabinet minute, "his Majesty," as Lord Howick observed, "expressed, on the 9th of February, a strong dissent."

The cabinet endeavoured to remove this uneasiness on the following day, by addressing a memorial to the King, which, as it obviously "*tends to place the subject in its true light*," in deferential accordance with his Majesty's permission, will now be presented, from a copy found amongst the Sidmouth papers, dated "Downing Street, Feb. 10th, 1807‡:" —

* Parliamentary Debates, vol. ix. p. 240.

† Speech of Lord Sidmouth on the 13th of April, 1807, p. 8. Printed for J. Hatchard.

‡ Such is the date given in the copy preserved amongst the Sidmouth papers, but it is evidently erroneous, for Lord Howick and Lord Sidmouth both state, in their printed speeches, that "the despatch containing this document was sent to the King at Windsor on the evening of the 9th."

"Present,

"The Lord Chancellor.	Lord H. Petty.
Lord President.*	Lord Grenville.
Lord Privy Seal.	Lord Ellenborough.
Earl of Moira.	Mr. Secretary Windham.
Viscount Howick.	Mr. Grenville.

†

"It is with the deepest and most unfeigned regret that your Majesty's servants learn that the proposed despatch to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has not, in all its parts, been honoured with that approbation from your Majesty which they had allowed themselves to hope for, and which, they still flatter themselves, it may ultimately obtain from your Majesty's gracious consideration of what they now beg leave to submit. They can assure your Majesty, with the utmost sincerity, that it has been their anxious endeavour so to frame the proposed instruction as that it might be entirely free from the difficulties that might attend other parts of this subject, *on which (as your Majesty knows) a difference of opinion prevails among the persons whom your Majesty has been graciously pleased to call to your councils, and on which they are all aware of the sentiments which your Majesty has at former periods expressed.*‡ They had persuaded themselves that in the clauses to be proposed for the Mutiny Bill, your Majesty would be of opinion that they are only fulfilling the engagement which had been formerly entered into under your Majesty's authority, and carrying into effect a principle which has already received the fullest and formal sanction by the act passed in the Irish Parliament in the 32d year of your Majesty's reign. That act enables your Majesty's Catholic subjects in Ireland to hold commissions in your Majesty's army, *with no other restriction than is there pointed out,* and if a similar provision be refused with respect to this part of the now United Kingdom, it appears obvious that the grace

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* Lord Sidmouth.

† Lord Spencer was absent through indisposition.—*Speech of Lord Howick.*

‡ This passage has been underlined by Lord Sidmouth.

thus conferred by your Majesty on that large body of your people must be rendered wholly illusory, and an appearance given of a conduct on the part of your Majesty's government not consistent with your Majesty's uniform and paternal beneficence towards your people, or with that openness and good faith with which your Majesty always wishes that your servants should conduct themselves in all the transactions of your government. In addition to these considerations, they beg leave to represent to your Majesty, with the most profound deference, and, at the same time, with the utmost earnestness, that the formidable dangers which now surround the country, from a state of affairs in Europe altogether unexampled, appeared to them to impose upon them the indispensable duty of proposing to parliament to unite in the common cause the military efforts of the whole population of your Majesty's empire, in order to secure the best interests of their country from ultimately sinking under the increasing preponderance of France. The absence and want of such aid would, in such a moment, be deeply felt; but your Majesty's servants fear that a still greater danger might result from conveying to so considerable a body of your Majesty's subjects the impressions which must follow from a decided refusal to admit them, under such circumstances, to a full share of the military defence of their country. Your Majesty's servants would, therefore, think themselves deeply criminal if they could disguise this peril from your Majesty, or if they could neglect to offer to parliament a proposal which they respectfully conceive is not liable to the ground of objection which your Majesty appears, at first view, to have felt to it, which, in its principle, is already sanctioned by a law long since passed and acted upon in many instances; which, in its form, would continually keep the subject within the care and control of parliament, to whom it must be annually submitted; and which, while it appears to them the measure best calculated to avert the dangers which they have humbly represented to your Majesty, affords, at the same time, the most probable means of preventing the agitation of those questions on which the opinion of parliament has been so recently pronounced."

His Majesty's answer to the above minute, which is also given from a copy preserved by Lord Sidmouth, was as follows: —

"Windsor Castle, Feb. 10th, 1807.

"The King has received Earl Spencer's letter, transmitting a minute of cabinet, with the despatch from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the draft of the proposed answer to which it refers. Whilst his Majesty approves of that part of the answer which instructs the Lord Lieutenant to keep back any petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and to prevent the renewal of a question upon which his Majesty's sentiments and the general sense of the country have already been so clearly pronounced, the King cannot but express the most serious concern that any proposal should have been made to him for the introduction of a clause in the Mutiny Bill which would remove a restriction upon the Roman Catholics, forming, in his opinion, a most essential feature of the question, and so strongly connected with the whole, that the King trusts his parliament never would, under any circumstances, agree to it. His Majesty's objections to this proposal do not result from any slight motives. They have never varied; for they arise from the principles by which he has been guided through life, and to which he is determined to adhere. On this question a line has been drawn from which he cannot depart; nor can Earl Spencer be surprised that such should be his Majesty's feelings upon this occasion, as he cannot have forgotten what occurred when the subject was brought forward seven years ago; and he had hoped, in consequence, that it would never again have been agitated.

(Signed) "GEORGE R."

Lord Sidmouth stated in his speech, that on the receipt of this communication —

"In the evening of the 10th, another cabinet meeting was held, at which a minute was prepared, describing, in terms the most respectful, the precise grounds on which his Majesty's servants deemed it incumbent upon them to solicit his

Majesty's permission to propose to parliament clauses to the effect before stated, to be inserted in the Mutiny Bill then pending in the House of Commons; without adverting, however, to the expediency of repealing the exceptions in the Irish Act, or of extending the measure to the naval service. To this minute of cabinet, which was communicated to his Majesty by Earl Spencer, the Secretary of State, no answer was returned the next day; but a council being then held, he (Lord Sidmouth) had, previously to it, at an audience on the business of his office, been questioned by the King on the subject; when he informed his Majesty, that he had been induced to concur in the proposed measure as a necessary consequence of the Irish Act of 1793; from the consideration of which, combined with the Act of Union, it appeared to him there was no alternative but either the repeal of the Irish Act or the adoption of this measure.* His Majesty then declared that he could not consent to any new concession; but that in consequence of the Irish Act, and on that account alone, he would take the proposition of his cabinet into further consideration, and return an answer on the following day. The answer stated that, 'however painful his Majesty had found it to reconcile to his feelings the removal of objections which might have the most distant reference to a question which had already been the subject of such frequent and distressing reflection, he would not, under the circumstances in which it was so earnestly pressed, and adverting particularly to what took place in 1793, prevent his ministers from submitting for the consideration of parliament the propriety of inserting the proposed clauses in the Mutiny Bill. Whilst, however, the King so far reluctantly conceded, he thought it necessary to declare that he could

* Lord Sidmouth, when describing this interview to Mr. Abbot on the 1st of March, said, that "he had with difficulty persuaded the King to consent even to extend the Irish Act of 1793 to Roman Catholic officers in the army when coming to England, and that his Majesty had only acceded to it at last as a strict consequence of the Union, by which the law then in force in Ireland was virtually adopted for England."

not go one step further; and he trusted this proof of his forbearance would secure him from being, at a future period, distressed by any further proposal connected with the question.' " *

It is difficult to imagine how the ministers could have understood this answer as approving of any thing more than the extension through the whole United Kingdom of an act hitherto limited to Ireland; still less "as conveying a positive though reluctant consent" to further concessions: yet this was the interpretation placed upon it; and "under that high sanction," as Lord Howick observed in his speech, "the despatch was sent to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland."

That despatch Lord Sidmouth has described in his speech as "referring exclusively to the three following objects: namely, exempting Irish Roman Catholics holding commissions from penalties, if called upon to serve in England; securing to Roman Catholic officers and soldiers the same free exercise of their religion which was afforded to all other classes of his Majesty's subjects; and extending the capacity of holding military commissions which was conferred by the Irish act to his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in this part of the United Kingdom." It was stated in parliament, both by Lord Grenville and Lord Howick, that at the conference which took place between the government of Ireland and the leading Roman Catholics, in consequence of this despatch, one of the latter inquired "whether or not the proposed measure was to be limited by the restrictions of the Irish

* Speech, pp. 8, 9, and 10.

Act ?" * To this Mr. Elliot replied, that it was not: nevertheless, being somewhat doubtful on the point, he submitted the question to the government at home, and then it appeared, to use the words of Lord Howick, "that the measure had not been distinctly understood; that not only his Majesty, but some members of the cabinet, had not been fully aware of its extent; and," he added, "I must confess that I had not myself sufficiently attended to the distinction between it and the Irish Act. When this appeared it became the subject of a new deliberation, in which an objection was stated by a respectable member of the cabinet, Lord Sidmouth, to any concession beyond the Irish Act. A majority, however, concurred in recommending the measure."

The opposition which Lord Sidmouth raised immediately on his discovering that "new concessions were intended" being thus outvoted, the next step taken by the cabinet was to "send another despatch to Ireland, containing copies of the clauses which laid open the army and navy to the Roman Catholics; with a remark subjoined, that the Lord Lieutenant might answer the question which had been put to him on that point in the affirmative." †

Notwithstanding, however, the probability, that, as Lord Sidmouth had misunderstood their intentions, the King might have done the same, the majority of the cabinet, instead of coming to a direct explanation with his Majesty, merely submitted to him the despatches and clauses above alluded to, without particularly directing his Majesty's attention to the fresh

* Speech of Lord Howick, p. 11.

† Parliamentary Debates, vol. ix. p. 240.

concessions which they embraced; and because the King (overlooking, as it afterwards appeared, the points of deviation) returned the documents "without a word of comment or objection *," they somewhat hastily interpreted his Majesty's silence into approval. This occurred on the 2d of March, the remainder of the month of February having been consumed in these proceedings.

The narrative will now be continued chiefly from Mr. Abbot's diary for March, on the first of which month he recorded as follows: — "Lord Sidmouth desired to deposit with me his determination not to agree to granting the Catholics liberty to hold staff commissions. * * * It was now proposed that the concession should be carried into effect in its largest sense, and the King was again to be asked for his consent. The cabinet were about to meet this day upon that express topic." Here it is advisable to remark that from the moment Lord Sidmouth ascertained what was in contemplation, he frequently communicated to Lord Grenville "his objections, and the necessity under which he should feel himself of opposing the extension in Parliament." On one occasion he even "went to the Foreign Office, Lord Grenville being out of town, and expressed to Lord Howick his conviction that the extent of the measure was not understood by the King; and he owed it to that noble lord to declare that he manifested the

* Lord Howick's speech. It will not appear surprising that an unexpected point of this kind should have escaped the King's vigilance, when it is considered that his Majesty was at that time nearly deprived of sight, as the indistinct signature to the note of the 9th of April too clearly testifies.

utmost anxiety to remove any misapprehension on the part of his Majesty before the measure was submitted to parliament." When this subject was discussed in the cabinet on the 1st of March, Lord Sidmouth "declared his persuasion, founded on the King's language to himself on the 11th of February, and on his Majesty's answer to the minute of cabinet on the 12th, that the King was not aware of the extent of the proposed measure; and he likewise expressed his own sense of the necessity of putting an end to all doubts on a point of so much importance."* "The cabinet finally resolved to proceed with the clauses, although they admitted that the King had not been specifically acquainted with that part of the measure which enabled Roman Catholics to become generals on the staff. * * * Lord Grenville declined to be the person who should state the subject again to the King, and Lord Sidmouth said he certainly would not volunteer his advice to his Majesty; but when he should see him, on Wednesday, he should, if asked, give his own opinion, and act upon it, whether sanctioned by the King or not; and so the cabinet parted."† "On the 2d of March his Lordship again pressed the subject on Lord Grenville, and learnt from him that the clauses had been sent that day to the King for approbation; and on the following evening he found that his Majesty had returned them without comment. On Wednesday, the 4th, Lord Sidmouth waited on the King officially, and then apprised his Majesty of the nature and details of the measure."‡ "The King inquired

* Speech, p. 13.

† Mr. Abbot's Diary for March 2d.

‡ Speech, p. 14.

of Lord Sidmouth what he meant to do? He replied, that he should certainly oppose it, even if it had his Majesty's concurrence. The King was evidently much disturbed and agitated. On the same day Lord Howick also mentioned the matter to the King, who expressed his disapprobation with strong emotion." * "Lord Howick then explained to his Majesty that there were objections to the enactment of the proposed measure by clauses in the Mutiny Bill, and it was therefore determined to introduce a separate bill. Lord Howick acknowledged that the King then expressed much general dislike; but he understood his Majesty to conclude the conversation by words giving a consent — a reluctant one, he admitted; or, perhaps, it would be more correctly stated, as not withdrawing the consent which had been originally given." † On that occasion, however, as Lord Sidmouth observed on the 13th of April, "Lord Howick unquestionably misunderstood his Majesty's sentiments; since it was an indisputable fact, that his Majesty intended explicitly to declare that his consent was confined to that part of the measure to which he had before reluctantly acceded, namely, the extension of the act of 1793 to Great Britain." Acting, however, upon his erroneous impression, Lord Howick, on the following day, introduced his bill, "which was ordered to be read a second time on Thursday, the 12th of March." ‡ Un-

* Conversation of Lord Sidmouth, from Mr. Abbot's Diary.

† Lord Howick's speech, p. 14.

‡ On the same day Lord Sidmouth addressed to Lord Grenville the letter following, of which no further explanation can be given than is contained in his Lordship's indorsement: — "Extract from a letter to Lord Grenville."

"My dear Lord, Gloucester Place, March 5th.

"* * * * On the subject which we have discussed so fully

der these circumstances Lord Sidmouth wrote on Monday the 9th of March, to Lord Grenville, earnestly requesting an immediate interview, "since he found it impossible to act up to his own opinions on parts of this bill, in the manner which their influence on his mind necessarily required, and at the same time to satisfy his sense of what was due to the government of which he was a member." Accordingly, on the 10th, he had a conversation with Lord Grenville on the subject, and, as that proved unsatisfactory, on the next day he sent in his resignation in the following terms: —

"My dear Lord, Gloucester Place, March 11th, 1807.

"After having fully considered the difficulties we talked of yesterday, I am convinced that there is only one course for me to pursue with justice to you and with honour to myself. My opinion on parts of the bill respecting Roman Catholics, and the communications now going on with Mr. Canning for the purpose of connecting him with the government, separately afford sufficient ground for this conviction, and, when taken together, admit of no alternative. "Ever sincerely yours,

"SIDMOUTH."

Lord Grenville's reply, dated the same day, merely

I have nothing to add. That the loss of Lord Howick in the House of Commons would be severely felt is unquestionable; but I cannot concur with you in thinking that the effect of it, unless obviated by some previous arrangement, would be the dissolution of the government, still less do I agree in the opinion that the mode proposed is the only practicable one, or even the best that might be adopted. * * * It is, however, quite impossible for me to stand in the way of an arrangement to which you attach such extreme importance; it is also impossible for me to become a party to it. Ever sincerely yours,

"SIDMOUTH."

asked him to "suspend any resolution on the subject until they had once more talked the matter fully over." Lord Sidmouth, however, had already "made a similar communication to his Majesty, and immediately received his Majesty's gracious commands to remain in his office. Yielding, therefore, to these united influences, he acquiesced; though upon a distinct understanding that he was completely at liberty to oppose the bill then before parliament."* On that day also, the 11th, his Majesty expressed to Lord Sidmouth, in strong terms, his surprise at the extent of the proposition which had been opened in the House of Commons; and at the same time told Lord Grenville and Lord Howick that he never would go beyond the Irish Act of 1793. He then added, that if they had any farther communication to make on the subject, he would receive it at Windsor.† The cabinet were now fully aware of the King's sentiments, and met in council on Saturday evening, March 14th, to consider what measures they should pursue under the difficult circumstances in which they were placed. This fact was communicated in conversation by Lord Sidmouth to Mr. Abbot, from whose journal, of March the 19th, the narrative will now be continued:— "The cabinet broke up on Saturday night last, after much unpleasant conversation, without determining any thing." On Sunday the 15th a meeting was held of the Grenville part of the cabinet, to which neither the Lord Chancellor, Lord Sidmouth, nor Lord Ellenborough, was summoned; when a minute which had been agreed upon and forwarded to the King, "was in-

* Speech, pp. 15, 16. † Mr. Abbot's Diary.

serted in the proceedings of the cabinet*," in which, according to Lord Grenville's statement in parliament on the 26th of March, they "declared their readiness to suffer the bill to fall to the ground, and entirely to abandon the whole subject; but that although they did not mean to propose any other measures than those which his Majesty approved, they thought it necessary to reserve to themselves the right of stating their opinion of the great benefits which, they were persuaded, might be derived from pursuing a different line of policy, of openly avowing these sentiments in the event of the Catholic petition being presented, and of submitting to his Majesty, from time to time, such measures as they might deem it advisable to propose." † "This proposal of conditions," Lord

* This was communicated by Lord Grenville to Lord Sidmouth in the following words, extracted from a note dated—

"Downing Street, March 15th, 1807.

"I am going to-morrow morning to Windsor, to return time enough for the House of Lords. I send the King a paper to-night expressing a disposition to let the bill drop entirely, but I am by no means able to answer for the result. Ever yours,

"G."

This note Lord Sidmouth immediately forwarded to Lord Ellenborough with the following remarks:—

"I have just received the enclosed note. It is rather strange that we should not have been called to take a part in this morning's consultation; but, perhaps, it was as well to confine it to those who think quite alike on the subject. The result, I trust, will be satisfactory. I had a full explanation with Lord Howick this morning, with whom, upon this, as upon every occasion, I have reason to be quite satisfied. Yours most truly,

"S."

† Lord Howick's representation of the true import of the minute in question, does not materially differ from that of Lord Grenville. The latter, in his speech, bitterly complained of the

Sidmouth considered, "was deeply to be lamented. The effect on his Majesty was such as might have been expected. It appeared as if a question upon which, on religious and political considerations, his mind was entirely made up, was never to be at rest. Having, therefore, recently expressed a hope that he might not again be distressed on this subject, he now required that he should hear of it no more; and claimed from his ministers a written declaration to this effect." "On Wednesday the 18th," observed Mr. Abbot, to whom we now return, "the King saw his ministers, when they submitted their reasons for declining to give the pledge required. The ministers all understood that his Majesty would think of another administration; but they did not resign, nor were dismissed. The King gave Lord Sidmouth a full and gracious audience, but did not speak to him of eventual arrangements."

Simultaneously with offering his resignation, on the 11th of March, Lord Sidmouth had made overtures to Mr. Perceval for a communication respecting the best means of defeating the Catholic Bill, and *upon that subject only;* and a meeting was fixed for Friday the 13th; but in the interim, Lord Howick having finally postponed the second

publication of this minute in a newspaper in a garbled and mutilated form. It had been left in the office for the information of those who succeeded to the administration, but ought, he considered, on no account to have been divulged. As regarded the written declaration required from the government, it appears that Mr. Pitt received a similar requisition on the formation of the ministry in 1804, but adroitly avoided the difficulty by mentioning in his reply some other topics (see vol. ii. p. 287.), but not that one; thus giving it the appearance of an accidental omission.

reading of his bill, and the King not having accepted Lord Sidmouth's resignation, the latter requested Lord Arden to explain to Mr. Perceval the reason of his declining the interview, which was, that the step "would be premature and improper until he was fully informed of the final determination of the government. All this was subsequently explained to Lord Grenville, who in their parting conversation expressed his unqualified satisfaction in all Lord Sidmouth's intercourse." * It was, indeed, extremely creditable to all parties, that under the difficult circumstances in which Lord Sidmouth, Lord Grenville, and Lord Howick stood towards each other on this occasion, nothing disrespectful or unpleasant ensued, and that from thenceforth, notwithstanding the political storms by which they were frequently forced asunder, they continued mutually to esteem each other until the close of life.

The administration was now considered at an end, and on the 19th of March, Lords Hawkesbury and Eldon were sent for to the King at Windsor. The latter noble lord, writing at this period to his brother, expressed a most friendly regret that Lord Sidmouth was not included in the new arrangements: — "My earnest wish and entreaty," he observes, "has been that he should, and many others have wished it; but it has been urged by some that at this moment it cannot be." If, however, there had existed no objection to a coalition with Lord Sidmouth on the part of any of the supporters of the new administration,

* Mr. Abbot's Diary.

still his Lordship had resolved, upon no consideration, to take office at the present conjuncture; and to this he was influenced as well by a feeling of delicacy towards his recent colleagues as by an anxiety to show the disinterestedness of his opposition to their late fatal measure. His relatives, Mr. Bathurst and Mr. Hiley Addington, entirely participated in these feelings, and tendered their resignations through him to his Majesty, whose gracious acceptance of the same was announced to his Lordship, by the Duke of Portland, on the 30th of March. Lord Buckinghamshire, however, not being in the cabinet, was differently situated; to him, therefore, Lord Sidmouth wrote on the 22d, "urging his Lordship not to permit the relation in which they stood to each other to be an obstacle to his acceptance of any office offered to him in the new government, which it may become him to fill." The cabinet was nearly re-constructed by the 25th, upon which day the retiring ministers resigned the seals of office. The King, in parting with Lord Sidmouth, to whom he accorded an audience of leave, "making this distinction between his Lordship and the other ministers," was pleased to observe to him that "all would come right at last." * This compliment, however, did not sufficiently express the nature of his Majesty's feelings; and he therefore addressed to Lord Sidmouth, on the same day, the following most gracious acknowledgement, which was received with lively gratitude and satisfaction: —

"Queen's Palace, March 25th, 1807.

"Although the King is deprived of the services of Lord Sidmouth in the arrangement which he has made for the

* Mr. Abbot's Diary.

formation of a new administration, his Majesty cannot release him from his situation without expressing to him the satisfaction which he has derived from the support which Lord Sidmouth has given to him throughout the progress of a transaction in which his decided principles and his feelings were at stake. The King is not less sensible of the readiness with which Lord Sidmouth complied with his wish that he should continue in office for the last fortnight, under circumstances which, his Majesty is well aware, must have been equally painful and embarrassing; and he desires Lord Sidmouth will be assured, that he shall ever feel a sincere interest in his welfare.

"GEORGE R."

The sentiments which his Lordship carried with him into retirement are expressed in the following letters to his friends: the first, which was addressed to Lord Chatham, having been written on the 29th of March:—"I regret," he observes, "that I did not see you again before I left town, as I was most anxious to explain a part of our conversation which related immediately to myself. * * * On the question which has led to the change, I have opinions as decided as can be entertained on any subject, and I need not say that my sentiments of duty and affection to his Majesty are unaltered and unalterable. I must nevertheless declare, that full reflection, since we parted, has only served to strengthen the conviction that it is not possible for me to hold an official situation under the present government." The nature of the conversation alluded to above is explained in the following extract from a letter which his Lordship addressed to Lord Buckinghamshire on the same day:—"Lord Chatham called upon me on Friday, and we had a full and satisfactory conversation. He said

every thing that was most friendly in his own name, and every thing that was handsome in that of his colleagues; but my determination is fixed not to take an official situation under the present arrangement. I will remain perfectly free to act as my own unbiassed sense of duty may direct." On the 1st of April he thus pursued the subject to Mr. Bathurst: — "The recent event is still *in ore omnium.* The impropriety of the explanations in parliament is, I believe, very generally felt.* The impression which might have been made by them was, I hope, in some degree obviated in the House of Lords; but we shall have other discussions, and I cannot suffer any consideration whatever to starve or fetter the justice that is due to the conduct of his Majesty towards his late servants. I shall avoid any pledge of any sort. No measures and no individuals must be forced upon the King: but the government, it is generally thought, cannot stand as it is; and one mode of strengthening it, of which you may be sure I hear a great deal, is entirely out of the question. I lament that you are not likely to be here when Brand's motion is discussed. * * * It is very material to show that the strength we possess will not be made use of for the purpose of overthrowing or harassing the government."

In fulfilment of the intention expressed above, Lord Sidmouth, on the 7th of April, addressed a letter to the King, through Lord Chatham, requesting his Majesty's permission to explain in the House of Lords (should the subject again be discussed) "such

* This alludes to the explanations made by Lords Grenville and Howick in parliament on the 26th of March.

particulars as might appear to him to be material, for the purpose of placing the transaction in its proper light;" and received the reply with which the reader is already acquainted. On the 13th of April, therefore, he stated all the circumstances of the transaction in a speech, which, having been subsequently printed, has supplied many materials for this chapter.*

On retiring, now for the third time, from the councils of his sovereign, Lord Sidmouth pursued the same loyal and temperate course as upon the two former occasions. By disconnecting him from the Whig party, the late crisis had brought him back one step nearer his original position, from which he had been displaced by that dislocation of political bonds in 1804, occasioned by Mr. Pitt's coalition with Mr. Fox; and although he considered the new administration extremely feeble, still, as he remarked to Bishop Huntingford, "*it is the King's government, and to a systematic opposition I will never be a party.* It is my firm determination," he proceeded, "to support the King, and to resist any attempt to discredit his late conduct, to fetter his prerogative, or to offer any violence to his feelings on a point on which his sense of civil and religious duty is deeply and unalterably committed. Under this impression, I shall think it incumbent upon me to oppose any motion, which, though only expressive of approbation of the

* The necessity of this explanation was pointed out to his Lordship on the 5th of April, by Mr. Hatsell. "Many persons are still unable to comprehend how the misconception arose on the part of his Majesty on which the merits of the question depend. This certainly ought not so to remain; and if Mr. Perceval does not, I hope some person will make the matter clear to parliament and to the world, otherwise the King has not had fair play."

conduct of his late servants, is intended to call in question that of the King."

This loyal sentiment he repeated, in still more explicit terms, to Lord de Dunstanville, on the 5th of April, in the following words:—"The course to be pursued by those who cannot allow themselves to be the mere instruments of either party, obviously, is to support the King, and to resist any motion the tendency of which is to throw an imputation on his Majesty's conduct, or to control the just exercise of his prerogative. Whatever may be my opinion of his Majesty's present servants, I cannot join in harassing them by a leagued and systematic opposition; and on the other hand, whatever may be thought of the late ministry, it is utterly inconsistent with any notions I have of constitutional principle or public duty to attempt to force them back upon the King."

The Duke of Portland appears to have been fully sensible of this forbearance on the part of Lord Sidmouth and his friends; for on the 14th of April he authorised Mr. Perceval to offer to Mr. Bathurst, through Lord Sidmouth, the office of Surveyor General of Woods.

"I am aware," Mr. Perceval added, "how interested an application this is which I am making to him, for his assistance is a tower of strength to any government. Thanking you most sincerely, for my country as well as for myself, for the part which you took in the House of Lords, I am very faithfully and truly yours,

"SP^R. PERCEVAL."

The course which Lord Sidmouth pursued throughout this anxious period was highly approved of by his numerous correspondents. One of them, the Earl of

Buchan, "the intimate friend of four consecutive prime ministers," whose faithful and disinterested attachment to his Lordship deserves to be gratefully recorded in this work, after blaming the conduct of the late administration, observed, "I am glad to say my brother, the late Chancellor, is an exception to this censure." It is known, indeed, that Lord Erskine differed from the majority of his colleagues on this question; and whilst he considered them perfectly right in declining to make any pledge, expressed himself decidedly averse to the measure they had proposed. Another of Lord Sidmouth's attached and consistent adherents, Sir James Graham, M. P. for Ripon, informed him that he should "take this opportunity of retiring into private life, and that it would be a source of lasting satisfaction to him to reflect that, throughout his political course, he had never, in the slightest degree, differed from his Lordship in opinion." It is a singular circumstance, that whilst Lord Sidmouth's conduct at this conjuncture was thus satisfactory to his friends, it afforded no reasonable grounds of complaint to the colleagues from whom he differed. He had approved of the extension of the Irish act of 1793 to Great Britain, as an act of justice; and "as he had expressly notified to Lord Grenville on taking office, that whether in the present or future reign, in or out of office, he would ever resist to his utmost the Catholic question *," he acted with perfect fairness and consistency, in opposing the further concessions comprehended in Lord Howick's bill. Neither was the question itself, as viewed by the King and Lord Sid-

* Vol. II. p. 416.

mouth, by any means unimportant: on the contrary, every concession was of moment in the opinion of those who conscientiously thought that power could not be delegated to the members of so exclusive a church as that of Rome, especially in Ireland, where, within a few years, two formidable rebellions had occurred, with safety to our Protestant constitution. After the 13th of April Lord Sidmouth took no part in the debates in parliament, which, having been called by the late government, was prorogued, by commission, on the 27th of April, and shortly afterwards dissolved.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1807—1809.

Lord Sidmouth considers the Plan of the new Ministers for the Defence of the Country insufficient. Prints his Speech on the Militia Transfer Bill. Condemns the Bombardment of Copenhagen, and the Conduct of England towards Denmark. Portugal seized by France. British Orders in Council. Lord Sidmouth's Sentiments thereon. His Lordship opposes the Address — Signs a Protest. Receives a Letter from Lord Erskine. Moves, first, the Restitution of the Danish Fleet, and, secondly, the Restoration of Danish Merchant Vessels. Prints his Speech. His Sentiments on the Roman Catholic Question. Debate on the Defence of the Country. Patriotic War in Spain. Sir Arthur Wellesley and Sir John Moore. Lord Sidmouth's Opinion of the War. Anecdote of Lord Grey. Sir A. Wellesley's second Expedition into Spain. War between France and Austria. Lord Sidmouth's Speech on the Orders in Council — Approved by Mr. Pinkney. His Speech respecting "Licences under the Toleration Act." Substance of his printed Speech on the War Taxes Extension Bill.

As the author enters upon a fresh division of his undertaking, the sight of the larger portion of his materials, still unused, forcibly urges him to compress his further extracts and remarks within the smallest possible limits. Especially is this advisable with respect to the ensuing five years during which the subject of this biography occupied no official situation. Instead, therefore, of pursuing his Lordship's course through all the indentations of the coast, the narrative — stretching across from point to point — will now

only touch at the most prominent headlands. Of these the first which requires notice presented itself to view on the 10th of August, when the Militia Transfer Bill, for enabling 28,000 men, from the militia in Great Britain, to volunteer into the regular army, was read a second time in the House of Lords. The disastrous battle of Friedland, and the signature of a treaty of peace between Russia and France, at Tilsit, on the 7th of July, having placed the whole continent of Europe at the feet of Napoleon, the danger of invasion, though the enemy had not yet renewed his threat, had become, in reality, greater than ever. Increased and immediate preparations for defence, therefore, were indispensable, especially as those previously subsisting had, since the renewal of the continental war, been partially relaxed. In this emergency the plan which the government brought forward consisted merely of encouraging 28,000 men to enlist from the militia into the line, and of raising men by ballot to supply the deficiency. This Lord Sidmouth considered wholly inadequate to the necessity, and he therefore fully expressed his sentiments on the whole question, in the debate of the 10th of August. The speech which he delivered on the occasion he afterwards published; and as it related to a subject which was not only important in itself, but had led to the dissolution of his government in 1804, it is deemed advisable to insert the following abstract of its contents: —

His Lordship declared his opinion that the plan so tardily brought forward was ill adapted to our actual situation, and inadequate to the nature and magnitude of the danger. It appeared to be chiefly founded

on the expediency of increasing our disposable force, and on the supposition that there was no reason to expect an immediate attack on Great Britain or Ireland. This supposition, however, was not to be relied on, and without doubt our leading object at present should be to provide effectually for our domestic security. For this purpose he deemed it highly essential to revert to the principle of the training act of 1803, and to found upon that act a permanent system of defence against what ought now to be considered a permanent danger. His Lordship eulogised Mr. Windham's improved conditions of military service, as encouraging a reasonable hope that the country might hereafter supply and maintain a large regular army entirely by means of voluntary service; but this system, as was acknowledged even by its authors, was not likely to be attended with rapid success. This admission, he confessed, had surprised him, as coming from the same persons who, earlier in the war, had been foremost in complaining of the insufficiency of our military preparations for purposes of domestic security. At that time, however, there were in arms in the united kingdom between 600,000 and 700,000 men, of which number 92,000 were regulars, 90,000 militia, 25,000 sea fencibles, and considerably more than 400,000 volunteers. Measures also were in progress, when the change of government took place, for adding 40,000 men to the disposable force; and an enrolment had been laid before parliament of 1,800,000 men, the whole or any part of which number was liable to be trained and called forward in case of invasion. That force, however, was then declared in-

sufficient; but now, when the power of the enemy was immensely increased, we were told that no extraordinary efforts were necessary, and that a new system of recruiting, wise, he admitted, in principle, but confessedly slow in operation, was all that was required for the augmentation of a force, which, after the late embarkation of 30,000 men for the Baltic, did not, he feared, at the present moment, amount to 140,000 men. Of the utter inadequacy of that force to the present exigency, there could, therefore, be no question, and the only remaining point for consideration was how the deficiency may be best and most speedily supplied. There was no nation in the world, his Lordship proceeded, where the disproportion between the population and the demands upon it for military service was so considerable as in this, or where the obstacles to the voluntary supply of such demand were so numerous and powerful. The compulsion resorted to for this purpose in other countries would be unwarrantable under a free government, as long as the safety of the state could be otherwise provided for; it was evident, however, that voluntary service could not be exclusively relied on for supplying the exigencies of the present crisis: he concurred, therefore, in opinion with Ministers, that for this purpose, some species of compulsion must be resorted to, and that upon the whole ballot was the most equitable and least severe; his difference, therefore, with the government, was not upon the principle itself, but upon the mode of applying it. After detailing at some length his objections to the government plan, his Lordship next observed that there

was another measure entirely exempt from objections, and already tested by experience, by means of which the object in view might be effectually accomplished. He adverted to the army of reserve, which had already been successfully proved in 1803, when, although it was first tried immediately after a ballot for 90,000 men for the militia, it produced within a month 15,000 men, 25,000 in two months, and in four months 37,000. All the means of defence, however, to which he had alluded, were far from commensurate with the exigency of the crisis. It was indispensably necessary, therefore, to exercise the authority confirmed to his Majesty by the legislature in 1803, enabling him not only to call upon all his subjects to assist in repelling an invading enemy, but also to require them previously to submit to such a course of training as would qualify them for active service in the field. Under the present circumstances, he concluded, the means of defence should know no limits but those of the population, and they would not be justified in relaxing their internal preparations on account either of their insular position, or the undisputed superiority of the navy. They should at once, as far as human means could avail, render themselves invulnerable, or at least invincible. The enemy must find them an armed nation. With these impressions, it was to him a matter of astonishment to hear that the further parliamentary measures necessary for carrying a general training into effect were to be postponed until the ensuing session, and that it had been officially stated in another place that no danger was to be apprehended before the spring. It

should be recollected that the French armies might return from Poland with the same rapidity with which, in 1805, they had marched from Boulogne to the Danube, or in 1806, from the Rhine to the Vistula, and that, so far from the winter being an impediment, it was the depth of that season when General Hoche anchored in Bantry Bay. These were circumstances which surely called for the serious and immediate attention of government, and imposed upon it the urgent duty of making the most of the time yet allowed for preparation.*

These wise and patriotic sentiments, which, his Lordship informed his brother, he had placed on paper and prepared for the press in two short sittings, though not intended to produce any effect on the disposition

* Amongst the friends to whom his Lordship sent a copy of this speech, was Mr., afterwards Chief Justice, Dallas, who, on the 7th of November, acknowledged its receipt in the following words:—"Accept my best thanks for your Lordship's speech on the public defence; a discussion politically wise and just, and proceeding upon the soundest constitutional principles. * * * My mind has long been deeply impressed with the necessity of our becoming, to use your Lordship's words, 'an armed nation.' In our making this a great and leading principle, alone can consist any rational hope of safety, if ever the contest is to be decided on our own shores. How kingdoms may pass away by the event of a single battle is a lesson too recently taught to be disregarded. Opposed to such an enemy, we can only expect to prevail by every house and ever hedge swarming with armed men. This I consider as the perennial principle of public safety, the salient source of national strength. It will enable us finally to triumph by protracted warfare, in which, numbers growing upon numbers, must at last overpower an enemy, whose force will every day diminish without the means of being recruited, whilst we retain our superiority at sea."

of parliament towards Ministers, contributed probably to warn the latter of the danger of the country, and of their own rashness in detaching at such a moment 30,000 of England's best troops on a distant expedition.

The proceedings of that expedition constitute another prominent object in the history of the year, upon which it will be necessary to pause.

The treatment which Denmark experienced at this period from Great Britain, in the violation of her neutrality, the bombardment of her capital, and the seizure of her fleet, was to Lord Sidmouth a source of real shame and unhappiness. As he described it to his brother, the parliament had been prorogued on the 14th of August, after a "session of mere words;" "much said and little done;" leaving his Lordship no immediate opportunity of publicly expressing his indignation at the strange and unworthy conduct of England in carrying out one of the worst principles of the French revolution by seizing upon the spoils of a neutral and defenceless power. Nothing, however, could exceed the disapprobation with which he alluded to that measure in his private correspondence. To the miserable plea of "self-preservation," which was literally the sole pretence at justification contained in the King's declaration of the 25th of September, he opposed the principle which Roscoe has so well laid down in his life of Lorenzo, "that no end can justify the sacrifice of a principle; nor was a crime ever necessary in the course of human affairs." On reference to the above-mentioned unfortunate document, it will be found that its main argument was

this: Denmark, at the close of the war in 1801, was asserted to have pleaded "her inability to resist the operation of external influence, and the threats of a formidable neighbouring power, as her apology for having then engaged in a hostile confederacy against Great Britain." The argument, therefore, of government, if argument it deserved to be called, was, that as Denmark had so acted above six years before, she possibly might now do the same; and consequently that it was justifiable to interfere by force to prevent her. Of a political doctrine so unworthy of a civilised and Christian state, it is not surprising that Lord Sidmouth should have expressed himself thus indignantly to his brother on the 3d of October. "The King of Great Britain, then, has been advised to declare to his own subjects, and to all civilised countries, that 'the state and circumstances of the world' have cancelled all the obligations of good faith, and annulled the law of nations; and that he feels it to be a duty to imitate henceforth the treachery, rapacity, and injustice of our adversary. When this system is sanctioned by parliament, England will be a rotten carcass, which had once been animated by a great and virtuous soul. When I die, Copenhagen will be found at the bottom of my heart. 'We have done a deed will make our name hereafter quoted in competition with all ill ones.'"

Touching upon the same subject to Lord Buckinghamshire, on the 24th of September, he remarked, that it "had been a peculiar satisfaction to him to observe, amongst those with whom he conversed, a strong tendency to what the *Morning Post* was pleased

to call 'moral quibbling,' but what ought more properly to be called a reverence for the rules of morality — a reverence which, perhaps, had contributed more than any other cause to the establishment of our national character, and to the extent and solidity of our political influence and power: but, looking at what had passed in the lowest point of view, he was convinced that it was not only a flagitious, but an unprofitable speculation, and that the acquisition of the Danish fleet was nothing to what had been gained by our adversary, through the sacrifice of our 'eternal jewel,' British honour and good faith. It was not even insinuated that there was any *mala fides* in the court of Copenhagen." Writing to Mr. Pole Carew, on the 15th of September, he observed, "We are pursuing a course not calculated to promote our real interests, and one which will make us detested by the world, and ashamed of ourselves. We shall soon be like Ishmaelites: our hand against every man, and every man's hand against us. Instead of taking a lesson from the vigour and perseverance of our opponent, we are in danger of becoming the weak and disgraced copyists of his rapacity and injustice. I have never yet despaired of my country; nor shall I, unless the detestable doctrine of fighting Bonaparte with his own weapons, — those, I mean, of mere strength, without right, and of temporary convenience, without regard to justice, — should be sanctioned by parliament. Might," he added, "now constitutes right: we have given the death-blow to all that remained of the law of nations. Our magnanimity and our honour have surrendered to our convenience and our fears, and Bonaparte has swelled his triumphs by a victory over

the good faith and moral character of Great Britain." In the truth of these remarks, indignant as they were, Lord Sidmouth's correspondents fully coincided; but the apathy exhibited by the public displayed the sagacity of Lord Buckinghamshire, who shrewdly questioned whether "the people of England would not so far lose sight of the national honour, as to suffer the justice of the question to merge in the success of the enterprise."

To such an extent, indeed, had dread of Bonaparte influenced some minds, and an inglorious triumph over an unprepared capital, and the surrender of some worn-out ships, operated upon others, that parliament, at its meeting, manifested no serious desire to efface this stain upon the honour of England. To account for the deep interest with which Lord Sidmouth regarded this question, it will be recollected that, as prime minister, he conducted the war against Denmark in 1801, and that he was engaged in concerting measures with Count Wedel Jarlsberg to avert hostilities on the very day of Nelson's victory. His Lordship, it has been seen, remarked very freely on the injustice and the impolicy of the proceedings against Denmark: and it must be confessed that his assertions, in both respects, are very easily capable of demonstration. It was not pretended that the Danes had committed any act of hostility against England, or manifested any overt intention whatever of doing so. Yet, suddenly, a large British armament approached Copenhagen, and closely blockaded the island of Zealand; so closely, indeed, that even the vessel in which Mr. Jackson, the British minister, was crossing the Great Belt, whilst proceeding to

Copenhagen, was boarded by our squadron, and several officers of the Prince Royal's staff were detained until released through Mr. Jackson's interference. The object of Mr. Jackson's mission was to obtain from the Prince Regent "*the delivery of the Danish fleet into the possession of the British admiral*, under the most solemn stipulation that it should be restored at the conclusion of the war between England and France." Was a more outrageous demand than this ever made on an independent nation in a time of peace? "In presenting this alternative," indeed, "every possible stipulation was to be advanced by which the interests of Denmark were to be fostered by all the resources of the British empire." What, then, does the reader imagine was the alternative alluded to, in case this proposed exchange of a national fleet for a few plausible promises should be declined? Nothing less than the immediate bombardment of the city; and this threat, posterity will scarcely believe, was actually fulfilled. Because the Prince Regent would not surrender his fleet, at the requisition of a power with which he was at peace, "on the night of the 2d of September a tremendous fire was opened on the devoted city, both from the land and sea, with such effect that in a short time a general conflagration ensued."* The report then

* The frightful slaughter occasioned by this bombardment was thus feelingly described by Lord Eldon, whose benevolent heart took a painful interest in the consequences of a measure to which, as a member of the cabinet, he had necessarily assented.

"Yesterday I dined at the Admiralty, and met there several admirals and captains just returned from Copenhagen, and we had full particulars. The state of the inhabitants in Copenhagen, and

states that a very feeble resistance was made — the plainest proof that could be given of the pacific intentions of Denmark, of her confidence in British justice, and of her not having entertained any suspicion of the aggression meditated against her. When Mr. Jackson passed through Zealand a few days before, there was not a battalion of troops of any description in the whole island, nor a single gun mounted on the ramparts of Copenhagen. The dreadful scene was repeated on the night of the 4th, and on the following day the inglorious object of this war was obtained by the surrender of the fleet, which was immediately conveyed to England, where peerages and other honours awaited the captors. The terms originally offered by Mr. Jackson, and repeated by Admiral Gambier on the 2d of September, were, that "the Danish fleet should be held in deposit, under the most solemn stipulation that it should be restored at the conclusion of the war, with all its equipments, in as good a state as it may be received." Notwithstanding this solemn stipulation, however, the Danish ships were afterwards employed as if they were our own. The author, at least, can bear witness that the finest of them was, since he passed several days, during the winter of 1810, on board the Christian the Seventh, when she bore his

their distresses, must have been terrible and tremendous. *In one street our mortars destroyed five hundred persons, principally poor helpless women and children!!!* * * * It made my heart ache and my blood run cold, to hear the accounts these gentlemen gave."

Strange indeed that all this blood-guiltiness should have been incurred by our government for the sake of some old rotten ships; for the whole Danish fleet contained but four ships of the line which were less than ten years old.

father's flag as Commander in Chief in the North Seas.

From the above concise narrative of facts, it is presumed that a correct opinion can be formed of the *injustice* of this proceeding. Its *impolicy* may be still more readily shown; for,—independently of the moral impression which must have been produced on the Continental powers by Great Britain's imitating the conduct of the French government in one of its most unjustifiable practices,—after viewing the case in the way most favourable for ministers, and presuming, for the sake of argument, their suspicions of the Dane to have been well founded, still the policy they followed was exactly that most likely to mar their own object. For, had they refrained from this act of spoliation, Bonaparte might indeed have seized the fleet, but he could only have done so by making the whole Danish nation his secret and determined enemies; whereas, by the course which they pursued, they only made an acquisition which they did not themselves require, and which, even if possessed by France, would have been no compensation for the loss of the Spanish, the Dutch, and her own navies, and at the same time entailed upon this country the indignant and unceasing hostility of Denmark for the remainder of the war. "The only possible justification of the expedition," as Dr. Beeke observed to Lord Sidmouth whilst it was in progress, "would have been a secret understanding with the Crown Prince; but as to the attempt to take Copenhagen *by force*, whether it succeeds or fails, I see no great difference in the degree of mischief to England that must follow."

The anxiety which Lord Sidmouth felt at being

obliged to differ from the government, as regarded their "neglect of the public safety, and their sacrifice of national honour," doubtless aggravated the symptoms of a severe fall from his horse, which he experienced early in the autumn. The injuries he received on that occasion approximated so closely to concussion of the brain, as to require a prolonged course of entire seclusion and careful medical treatment; and for a considerable time after his comparative convalescence, he suffered greatly from headache upon the slightest exertion, either of mind or body. This distressing consequence, however, gradually disappeared, and towards the close of the year his correspondence became as interesting and energetic as usual. At this period the occupation of Portugal by a French army closed against England the ports of almost the only continental power which remained friendly to her — an event to which Lord Sidmouth alluded, on the 23d of November, in the following words addressed to his brother: —

"After all, the court of Lisbon will probably recur to the original intention of going to the Brazils. Russia was civil whilst Gambier was in the Baltic, and will be quiet till her fleets are safe. If we were suffering from the mere chances of war, we might meet our difficulties with an unruffled mind, but the torturing reflection is, that they have all been brought upon us by our own folly, precipitation, and violence. *If the system which was departed from upon the change in May,* 1804, *had been persisted in,* I am firmly convinced that we should now have been at peace, or carrying on the war against France and Holland with a diminishing debt, and all the rest of Europe on our side. We must, however, look forward, and do our best."

During this autumn the publication of the British "Orders in Council," in retort of the French decrees

"declaring the British islands to be in a state of blockade, and confiscating all articles of British manufacture or merchandise," opened that complicated question respecting the rights of neutrals, upon which so many important interests depended. This almost interminable subject is here introduced simply for the purpose of presenting Lord Sidmouth's first impressions respecting it, which he expressed to Mr. Bathurst, on the 1st of December, in the following words:—

"The late orders in council have led to a struggle, very hazardous in itself, and doubtful in its issue. If the inhabitants of the Continent are induced, either by fear of Bonaparte or dislike of us, to hold out, we are completely discomfited; and our success or failure depends upon them, and not necessarily upon any exertions of our own. It is, besides, a fresh application of the doctrine of political convenience in opposition to strict justice, for us to fetter the whole of the *fair* trade of neutrals with the Continent of Europe, because our enemy has imposed upon a part of that trade restrictions injurious to ourselves;—restrictions to which it does not yet appear that they (the neutrals) have submitted; and if they had, their acquiescence would justify no other sort of retaliation than restraints upon their trade with us and our immediate dependencies, and a recurrence, at which I should rejoice, to the rule of 1756, the abandonment of which, in 1794, has involved us in the greatest difficulties. I find the price of sugar is rather rising in the London market. '*Il faut avoir le sucre*,' you probably recollect, was a declaration from Bonaparte to Lord Whitworth, above four years ago; and the opulent and luxurious on the Continent are striving to obtain it at almost any risk and any price. This, however, I fear, will not last long, as the penalties on the use of colonial produce on the Continent are too likely to be effectual, and they are, about this time, to be enforced." *

* His objections to these orders remained unabated, and he

The subject, however, to which his Lordship chiefly devoted the earlier hours of convalescence, was the conduct of Great Britain towards Denmark, "compared with which," he declared that "nothing had ever made such an impression upon him." For a long time he trusted that government possessed evidence, as yet undisclosed, of the undoubted hostile intentions of the Danish court; as he "could not bring himself to believe that Lord Chatham, Lord Hawkesbury, and Perceval would have been parties to the act committed in the Baltic, except for much stronger reasons than any which had yet been assigned." But when it appeared at the meeting on the 21st of January, 1808, that the King's speech contained no offer of papers explanatory of this proceeding, and pleaded no grounds in justification of it, except necessity, and the alleged "intention of the enemy to force neutral states into hostility to his Majesty, and bring their navies to bear against his dominions," his Lordship could no longer keep silence under his disappointment, and therefore, in a sound and argumentative speech, seconded the amendment of the Duke of Norfolk, who moved "that the whole paragraph, approving the late expedition to Denmark, should be omitted from the address." No division, however, took place; but, on the following day, we find Lord Sidmouth corresponding with Lord Erskine respecting the terms of the subjoined protest, which, in addition to their own signatures, bears those of the Dukes of Gloucester and Norfolk, Earls Moira, Lauderdale, Grey, and Lord Holland: — "Dissentient. Because

voted in the minority on Lord Grenville's motion for rejecting the Orders in Council Bill on the 16th of March, 1808.

no proof of hostile intention on the part of Denmark has been adduced, nor any case of necessity made out, to justify the attack upon Copenhagen; without which the measure is, in our conception, discreditable to the character and injurious to the interests of this country." To this Lord Erskine appended a second able and elaborate protest, containing thirteen distinct arguments, and headed, "Dissentient for the above reasons, and for those that follow," a copy of which he forwarded to Lord Sidmouth, accompanied by this note: —

"Reigate, Monday, January 25th.

"I enclose you a copy of the protest which I thought it right to put upon the journals, that it might not depend upon government reporters to send down to posterity our principles and opinions. We are at issue upon the very existence of the moral civilized world; and I hope you will be pleased to see sentiments so entirely the same as those you yourself delivered, though not so well expressed.

"I could not help congratulating our friend, Lord Ellenborough, that whatever you may have suffered from your fall, it had not in the least affected your *head*. I think you may well sell your white horse for a great price, if you can warrant, that if he throws down the buyer, he shall get up again and make such a speech, which was indeed most excellent."

"Ever yours most faithfully,

"ERSKINE." *

At the same period Lord Sidmouth was communicating on the general subject with Lord Grenville, from whom he received, on the 22d of January, the following note: —

* It is a singular circumstance that the transatlantic statesman, Mr. Jefferson, should have included the "conflagration of Copenhagen," amongst several other facts, in proof of "the total extinction of national morality in the present age." — *Jefferson's Memoirs*, p. 87.

"My dear Lord,

"I enclose an *amended* draft of the amendment, which will, I believe, in some respects, meet your ideas better than the other. The word "indignation," and the effective words in the House of Commons draft, "with a view to atonement," could not be omitted without the certainty of dividing the Opposition in that House. Indeed, by far the greater number of our friends think even those phrases too weak for the occasion, which is certainly one quite unexampled.

"Ever yours, GRENVILLE."

Disappointed in the endeavour to exclude from the address the sentence relating to the conduct pursued towards Denmark, Lord Sidmouth next directed his views to the eventual restitution of the Danish fleet, which subject he submitted to the House of Peers on the 18th of February, by means of the following proposition: — "That it is highly important to the honour of this country, that, under present circumstances, no measures be taken with respect to the ships of war now in possession of his Majesty in consequence of the capitulation of Copenhagen, which may preclude the eventual restitution of them to the government of Denmark, agreeably to the spirit of the requisition referred to in the proclamation issued on the 16th of August last, by the commander-in-chief of his Majesty's forces by sea and land employed on that occasion."

The House, by its decision on the first day of the session, had already recognised the justice of the measure which placed the Danish fleet in the possession of this country. His Lordship's present object, therefore, was to mitigate, in the view of foreign nations, the severity of that proceeding, by placing on record a public declaration that the ships would

be carefully preserved for the purpose of restoration on the return of peace. He must, however, have been actuated to this proceeding rather by an honourable disapproval of the measure complained of, than by any hope of carrying his motion, which was opposed more by numbers than by arguments, and was rejected by a majority of 105 to 51.

The argument in this case was thus clearly put by Bishop Huntingford on the 14th of February, after reading the words of Lord Sidmouth's intended resolution: —

"It is said 'it was necessary to remove the Danish fleet:' be it so, but for what reason? 'That it might not fall into the hands of the enemy:' true; but when peace is made, there will be no enemy; the cause of detention having ceased, the detention of what never belonged to you by any right or title whatever ought to cease likewise. Necessity cannot *then* be pleaded. 'But Denmark has been since hostile; and why restore ships to Denmark more than to France?' Because they came into your possession under circumstances of such a nature as never occurred in the capture of French ships. And as for Denmark's subsequent hostility, it has been but the resentment of British indignity and British violence; a resentment which reason, equity, and the law of nations will justify. But they will not justify Britain in appropriating to her own use ships taken absolutely in a time of peace, and before the slightest intimation of hostile design on either side, by memorial, complaint, or remonstrance. * * * The Russian Emperor says he will have complete 'satisfaction for Denmark.' Who can deny there is a dignity in his resentment? If our cause were just, I should despise the threats of Russia: in a cause unjust, the censure of an independent power carries forcible weight. * * * For these reasons, I hope the government will not impede your motion. If they do, I shall infer, they mean to sell ships, to which they positively have no more right than I have to the wealth of my neighbour, because I suspect he does not like me."

Notwithstanding this second disappointment, Lord Sidmouth's perseverance was not yet overcome, and as the Danish merchants had suffered the most unjust and heavy losses by the detention of their trading vessels in our ports, and their seizure by our cruisers previous to any declaration of war *, he moved, on the 18th of March, for various papers connected with this subject, with a view, as he informed the House, of "making them the grounds on which to build a future and general motion respecting these proceedings." The papers were granted, but their production was so long delayed, that his Lordship could not bring the question forward earlier than the 17th of May, on which day he presented for the adoption of the House, a series of seven resolutions, embracing the following propositions: — "1st, That the appropriation of the proceeds of the Danish ships and other property seized by Great Britain before the declaration of war be suspended, so that no obstacle may be occasioned thereby to such eventual compensation being made to the original owners as his Majesty, in his justice and liberality, may be pleased to direct; and, 2dly, That it would be highly honourable to this country, that Danish subjects detained or taken under such circumstances should be released on such conditions as his Majesty may be pleased to require."

These propositions his Lordship introduced in an able speech, the substance of which he afterwards published; but notwithstanding he showed that the masters of Danish merchant ships, although their fears

* This predatory system, so discreditable to Great Britain, was first introduced, it is believed, in 1756, by Lord Chatham's seizing the ships of Spain without a previous declaration of war.

were excited, had been induced to remain in our ports by their minister, Mr. Rist, after he had communicated with the British government on the subject; and also, *that orders had been issued by our Secretary of State and Board of Admiralty to detain Danish vessels some days before intimation of the commencement of hostilities was received in England;* still, such was the determination of parliament to support the measures of the cabinet, however questionable, that, on a division, the motion was rejected by a majority of 36 to 16.* With this unsuccessful attempt terminated his Lordship's efforts to obtain reparation for the injuries inflicted upon the unfortunate Danes. Considering, indeed, the gloomy aspect of affairs at that moment, the great value of the property seized, and the eagerness with which the whole nation had committed itself into an approval of the war, it was scarcely to be expected that parliament would calmly listen to the still small voice of equity and justice. The public was too much elated by such unexpected success to be willing to inquire

* His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester informed Lord Sidmouth by note, on the following day, that he had attended the House the evening before for the purpose of supporting his motion, but had unfortunately arrived ten minutes after the division had taken place.

Lord Sidmouth stated in his speech that the order was issued by the Board of Admiralty on the 25th of August, and repeated by the King in council on the 2d of September, whilst the first news of hostilities did not reach England until the 4th of September. His Lordship added, that the number of vessels seized under those orders in our own ports alone amounted to 320, the first fifty-three of which, when sold, averaged 5200*l.* each. The value, therefore, of the whole must have amounted to nearly two millions!!!

closely into the means by which it was obtained. Lord Sidmouth always regarded the whole proceeding as a stain upon the escutcheon of Great Britain; and he applied to it the remark of Livy, in the last section of his third book, when recording a dishonourable vote which the plebeians had passed, in order to defraud the people of Ardea: "Nequaquàm tantum agro intercipiendo acquiratur, quantum amittatur alienandis injuriâ sociorum animis. Nam famæ quidem ac fidei damna majora esse quàm quæ æstimari possent." These words, it is feared, were not wholly inapplicable to proceedings which, in the opinion of the Emperor of Russia* and other continental powers, justified the Prince-Royal of Denmark in terming England, in a state paper dated December 13th, 1807, "a perfidious enemy." It was truly fortunate, therefore, that the events which arose in Spain and Portugal afforded an opportunity of which the government, warned by experience, wisely took advantage, to retrieve our national character, and regain the confidence of our former allies, by the generous assistance extended to those nations.†

* To this point Lord Sidmouth alluded in the following words, when writing to his brother in November, 1808:—"We have now a practical comment on the measures adopted last year with respect to Denmark. The Emperor Alexander, instead of being a reluctant ally of France, is the fixed and exasperated enemy of Great Britain, and is, of course, taught, and willing to believe, that the cause of Spain is the cause of this country, which God knows it is, though not in the perverted sense in which *he* considers it to be so."

† "We can be now talking loud enough," wrote Bishop Huntingford on the 6th of July, 1808, "of the perfidy shown to the court of Spain; and happy for us it is that a more recent act of enormity has diverted public attention from our own violation of

It was an expectation that his opposition might produce an effect of this nature upon the future measures of government, which induced Lord Sidmouth to persevere so long, and enabled him to write to his brother in the following cheerful strain, on the day subsequent to his failure: —

"May 18th, 1808.

"You will be glad to hear that yesterday went off very much to my satisfaction. Neither the facts nor the principles upon which the motions were founded, nor the reasoning or authorities by which they were supported, were in the smallest degree called in question; and all that was contended was, that there was no necessity for such a discussion in parliament. The Lord Chancellor was feeble, and Lord Ellenborough very powerful."

The feelings with which the Danes regarded Lord Sidmouth's "unavailing efforts in defence of their poor country," are expressed in very gratifying terms in the following letter, which M. Wallick, a Dane of high respectability, addressed to his Lordship as late as the 25th of July, 1830. M. Wallick, being in London, had obtained an interview with Lord Sidmouth, in which "the attack on Copenhagen in 1807" had naturally formed the topic of conversation. After alluding, therefore, to the same circumstance in the beginning of his letter to his Lordship, he proceeded as follows: —

"The feelings which I then experienced come upon me with redoubled force at this moment. How can it be other-

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good faith in the course of last year. But I much doubt whether Bonaparte, in seducing the court of Spain to Bayonne, has been more treacherous than we have been in seizing and selling mercantile vessels invited to our country by assurances of safety and protection."

wise? I owe every thing to the British nation. There is not a drop of blood in my heart, which I would not willingly shed in her behalf. Still I am a Dane, and bad indeed would it be if I had no room left in my heart for a sense of the wrongs of my native country. I therefore deeply lament the policy of those unfortunate times, and I am grateful towards the immortal men who so strongly deprecated the principle and tendency of that policy. The time has long gone by when any hope of redress remained, but the noble sentiments pronounced by your Lordship cannot be obliterated. They will derive renewed force from the lapse of time; they will live in men's memory, and be handed down on the brightest pages of history; they will influence periods less stern and harsh than that was which gave them birth; and, under Providence, they may prove instrumental in averting, or at least mitigating, the unhappy consequences of future similar measures.

"The following anecdote, connected with the Danish factory of Serampore, in Bengal, will corroborate the fact of there existing no idea whatever among the Danes of any meditated hostility, or any cause of it, until accounts of the blow having been actually struck were received, notwithstanding ships were arriving almost daily from all parts of Europe, which were afterwards captured. It being the birth-day of the Danish Sovereign, a grand entertainment was, as usual, to be given on the 28th January, 1808, to which the principal officers of the British cantonment at Barrackpore, lying on the opposite side of the Hooghly, and a number of families from Calcutta, had been invited. It was scarcely two months after my arrival from Copenhagen, which I had left the preceding April, and I was preparing for an early walk on that festive morning, when, at 6 o'clock, the aged chief agent of the Danish company came to me with breathless horror and dismay. He could not utter a syllable, but pointed to the window and to the flag-staff visible from it. Instead of the Danish colours flying on it in honour of the day, instead of the royal salute with which the anniversary was on the point of being announced, the English flag had been hoisted, and British officers and troops had taken possession of the factory, and the naval authorities had seized the numerous Danish

Company's and private ships, which had crowded together at that calamitous period. Your Lordship may easily guess how that day was spent, and how impossible it is for me ever to forget it.

"With sentiments of unbounded respect and esteem, I remain, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and humble servant,

"W. WALLICK."

There were but two other occasions on which Lord Sidmouth took an active part in public affairs during the present year. The first was in the debate which occurred on the 18th of March respecting a clause in the Mutiny Bill, allowing men to enlist in the army for life, which was opposed by the Duke of Gloucester, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Moira, and others, on the ground that it interfered with the system of limited service which had been introduced by Mr. Windham two years before, and had not yet received a fair or sufficient trial. On this subject Lord Sidmouth expressed himself to his brother in the following terms: —

"March 19th, 1808.

"We made an ineffectual attempt last night to protect the plan for limited service, but it received a severe, if not a fatal blow. I am, however, happy to tell you that an opportunity was afforded me of entering at large into the military measures of the late and present wars, and not a word was uttered in contradiction of any part of my statement."

The other subject in which Lord Sidmouth manifested a particular interest, was the debate of the 27th of May, on Lord Grenville's motion for taking into consideration the petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, praying "to be admitted to the franchises

of the constitution." Of the debate which occurred on that occasion, Lord Sidmouth, who led the van of opposition, gave the following description to his brother: — "The Catholic question, on Friday, was met coldly and tamely by all the ministers except Lord Hawkesbury, who made a firm and able speech. I spoke for about an hour, and, I find, satisfied some of my friends better than myself; but I suffered dreadfully from the heat of the house, which was uncommonly full. It is, however, a great satisfaction to me to have taken a part, and you will readily believe it was in a spirit very different from that attributed to me in the 'British Press.'† * * * I shall always have some pleasure in reflecting that I have, during the present session, used my best endeavours, although without success, *to stem the new policy of surrendering principles, which have heretofore been held sacred, to our fears of France;* and this new policy, I am grieved to say, showed itself most plainly and disgracefully in both Houses of Parliament upon the Catholic question."

As this was the first occasion on which Lord Sidmouth fully expressed his sentiments on the application of the Roman Catholics for admission to political power and privileges, which thenceforth became a subject of almost annual discussion, the following abstract has been made of the topics included in his speech: —

† On the 30th of May his Lordship complained in the House of Lords of the misrepresentations of the report given in the "British Press," and corrected several of them, especially one in which he was represented to have said that "the Protestant church in Ireland must be maintained by *persecution.*"

"The motion having been read, Viscount Sidmouth rose to submit the grounds upon which he differed from the noble lord, Grenville. He fully admitted the great importance and delicacy of the subject, and was therefore at a loss to account for its agitation at that moment. The petitioners had imprudently come forward under circumstances which rendered their public spirit and patriotism liable to imputation. They appeared not unwilling to do themselves some injustice for the sake of their object, and it was accordingly intimated that the ardour with which they might perform their duties at that most urgent conjuncture might depend, in some degree, on the fate of their petition. For the honour of those in whose behalf such a condition was held forth, he could not but question its reality. It was not to be supposed that the respectable individuals, to whom alone the objects of this petition were important, would thus bargain with their country at this moment of danger; that they could lose sight of the unexampled beneficence which they had experienced from their Sovereign, and, in return for the perfect security and toleration they enjoyed, and the removal of so many disabilities, would, by withholding their exertions, impair his means of defending their country's liberties and their own against the malignant enemy of every independent state in the world. After these comments on the time and mode of bringing forward the petition, his Lordship proceeded to notice its object, which he observed was narrow, selfish, and delusive, without possibility of advantage, except to a very few. Compliance with the petition would not at all affect the condition of the great body of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, whose restlessness and discontent arose from an imperfect state of civilisation, and from its concomitants, poverty, ignorance, and bigotry. The peasant could take little interest in any accession of honour and emolument to a superior whom he scarcely knew by name, and whom he regarded with no other feelings than those inculcated by his priest, the sole object of his respect, and by whom alone he was influenced and controlled. The deluded multitude, therefore, were only made use of for the attainment of an object in which they had little real interest, and the accomplishment of which would not remove

the material causes of the evils which affected Ireland. It was vain, therefore, to hope that a measure so limited as this would conciliate the great body of Irish Roman Catholics. Over past scenes of turbulence in Ireland he desired to draw a veil; but in looking to the future, it was advisable to consider how political power, if granted, was likely to be exercised by those who, it seemed, were not to be depended upon for the active performance even of their most essential duties, if it should be withheld.

"Lord Sidmouth next adverted to the objections to any further concessions to the Roman Catholics, which appeared to him to be insurmountable. Religion was the great bond of society; there must, therefore, be a religion of the State. This was peculiarly necessary in this country, where the reformed religion was an essential part of the constitution, and identified with our limited monarchy; they had always suffered together: puritanism and democracy overwhelmed both in the time of the Commonwealth; and in that of James the Second, both were endangered by the attempt to introduce Popery and arbitrary power. It had, therefore, been the wise policy of our ancestors to strengthen and protect the ecclesiastical establishment, and with it our civil constitution, by requiring that those who held certain offices of trust should give proofs of their fidelity and attachment to the Church as well as to the State. Upon this basis, the policy of religious tests was founded, and it was impossible to depart from it without a condemnation of the conduct of our ancestors. Such were his general objections. His special ones were; that there was no instance in which Protestants and Papists had agreed in the exercise of political power in the same State; that the mere attempt must occasion perpetual contention, especially where, as in the instance of Ireland, the weight of numbers was in one scale, and that of property in the other; that it appeared very dangerous to entrust persons with high political duties, in the conscientious exercise of which, they were liable to be controlled by a foreign, sometimes an adverse, authority; that the conduct of Roman Catholics being thus under the influence of others, they could not possibly be sure of themselves; that for the great body of persons of that persuasion,

particularly for the priests, this concession would do absolutely nothing: whilst, therefore, it would inevitably spread terror amongst the Protestants, it could not possibly have the effect of conciliating the Roman Catholics. These were some of the objections he felt to the proposition of the noble Baron; the practical object of which was to obtain a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and to dispense with the Oath of Supremacy, by which means, all distinctions on account of religion would be done away. In short, he saw no end to the difficulties and mischief to which this innovation, he feared, would lead. The objectionable tenets of the Church of Rome were still unchanged, and history afforded abundant proof that her doctrines and discipline were opposed to the progress of knowledge and to the civil and religious liberties of mankind. The revolution had been produced by a dread of arbitrary power, and he was surprised that those who were friendly to its principles should now countenance a relaxation in favour of a Church which had ever been the handmaid and instrument of despotism. The measures of severity which had originally been adopted under the pressure of an indispensable necessity, had, during the present reign, been gradually and completely done away. Perfect toleration was now enjoyed by the inhabitants of the whole United Kingdom; and in Ireland there was no other distinction between the Catholic and Protestant but that the former, by refusing to take the oath required by the Act of Supremacy, thereby disqualified himself from holding the highest situations of judicial, military, and political power.

"Much, however, remained to be done, and, he hoped, would be done, for Ireland. She required to be emancipated from poverty and ignorance, and those evils could only be obviated by industry and instruction. A well-digested system of education, and the increased residence of the Protestant clergy, would, he trusted, lay the foundation of a gradual change of habits and manners, favourable both to the interests of the State and the welfare of individuals. The object of which their Lordships must all be desirous — of gradually rendering Ireland a Protestant community—could not be effected by persecution, which had never yet made a real proselyte. With

these measures, *he should wish to combine a moderate provision, at the charge of the State, for the deserving part of the Roman Catholic clergy* *, with the view of convincing them, that by peaceable and becoming conduct, they would entitle themselves to the favour of government. His Lordship concluded by expressing his conviction that it was not by such a measure as was then proposed that Ireland was to be tranquillised, but by a comprehensive system, founded upon a just view of the condition of Ireland. The last thirty years had afforded constant proof of the inefficacy of concession. Every measure of that description had been followed by a fresh demand. The prodigal concessions of 1793, it was believed, had fully satisfied every possible claim; yet these were followed by two rebellions, the object of which, by the admission of those by whom they were excited, was—not Catholic Emancipation—but separation from England. This unhappy bias could only be altered by correcting the ignorance, promoting the industry, and improving the condition of the great mass of the people; by these means a feeling of confidence and security would be created, which, by encouraging the residence of the landlord, and bringing him into friendly communication with his dependants, must necessarily establish those links of mutual relation between the higher and lower classes so essential to a well-conditioned state of society."

From the sentiments declared in the above speech Lord Sidmouth never deviated; and it is, perhaps, not undeserving of remark, as an instance of his sagacity, that to provide a remedy for the evil of which he complained, namely, the insecurity of life, and the absence of any bond of union between the various orders of the community, is now, at the dis-

* In this view his Lordship coincided with Lord Wellesley, who, writing to him from Dublin Castle, March 5th, 1824, observed, "I often think of the policy of a public provision for the Roman Catholic clergy, and I am much inclined to suggest it to Mr. Peel; but the mode of effecting it offers many embarrassing questions."

tance of thirty-eight years, and after every remaining disability has been removed, the grand desideratum in the government of Ireland.

The debate under consideration terminated in the rejection of Lord Grenville's motion by a majority of 161 over 74. It was remarkable for the following explanation, by the Duke of Norfolk, of the mode in which the Roman Catholics proposed to give to his Majesty the power of rejecting their bishops. "They were disposed, he said, to lay before his Majesty a list of three persons, of whom his Majesty might reject two; the remaining one would be invested with the episcopal dignity; but if his Majesty were to reject the whole, then three other names would be submitted, and so on, until his Majesty should signify his approbation of any individual by allowing his name to remain." This proposition, Lord Grenville observed in his reply, "had long been in contemplation, although the Roman Catholics had not made it public until lately. It was known, indeed, to his right honourable friend now no more, Mr. Pitt, and was one of those guards and conditions with which he meant to accompany the concessions which he proposed to grant to the Roman Catholic body."

During the summer of 1808, French treachery and usurpation were carried to such an extent in Spain and Portugal, as at length to have excited an unappeasable spirit of resistance in both those kingdoms. England, therefore, no longer remained without a single continental ally; and the generous manner in which from that moment she devoted her blood and treasures to the liberation of the Peninsula, constituted, it must be admitted, a noble atonement for her

treatment of Denmark in the preceding year. Lord Sidmouth, who gathered from these events a glimmering hope that the independence of Europe might yet be preserved, was most anxious from the first that the battles of England should be fought, as long as possible, on Spanish soil; and he watched with lively anxiety the expeditions successively conducted by Sir Arthur Wellesley and Sir John Moore. His letters of that period indicate the highest admiration of the military exploits of the former commander; but in treating of the convention of Cintra, which in the first instance he erroneously attributed also to him, he could not refrain from applying to the too lenient conqueror the following words from Livy: — "Non eidem omnia Dii dedere. Vincere scis, Hannibal; victoriâ uti nescis."

The interest which his Lordship expressed in the exploits and death of the heroic Moore, was equally intense. He had long been acquainted with the general's brother and biographer, Mr. James Moore; and there exists a letter from that gentleman, conveying the thanks of the venerable mother for the kind interest his Lordship had taken in her bereavement.

Lord Sidmouth admired the conduct of Sir John Moore, and strongly disapproved of the treatment which that officer had received from the government. He therefore cordially supported Lord Grey in a motion which he made on the 21st of April, 1809, that "a humble address be presented to his Majesty," expressing the strong disapprobation of the House at the manner in which the efforts made by his Majesty during the last campaign in support of the people of

Spain and Portugal, had been conducted. In his speech on that occasion, Lord Sidmouth lamented that the ministers had so mismanaged the cause of the Spaniards, whilst he gave them credit for the zeal and sincerity which they had displayed in its promotion. His Lordship also expressed himself most decidedly in favour of assisting the Spaniards, to the utmost extent, in their struggle for independence, as long as there remained the slightest hope of success; and in this last opinion he differed from the noble earl whose motion he was then supporting: for in his later years he used often to relate the following conversation which he held with Lord Grey on their meeting accidentally in the street, at the period when Lord Wellington occupied the lines at Torres Vedras: — "I am convinced," observed Lord Grey, "that in six weeks' time there will not remain a single British soldier in the Peninsula except as a prisoner." "Though that should be the case," replied Lord Sidmouth, "I still should prefer it to our retiring from Portugal without making any further efforts." "Then," rejoined Lord Grey, "we cannot talk on the subject." *

* His Lordship's correspondence contains frequent intimations of the correct view which, from the earliest period, he had taken of the Peninsular struggle. Thus, he observed to his friend, Lord de Dunstanville, in November, 1808, — "the resources of this country are, thank God, still abundant, and its strength unimpaired.

'Sunt et opes nobis, et adhuc intacta juventus;'

And yet our taxes have been more than trebled within the last fifteen years. In the quarter to which our anxiety is at this moment peculiarly directed, though there may be little ground for confidence, there is none whatever for despair. A species of

Lord Grey's motion was negatived by a majority of 145 over 92; but it appears from a letter to Mr. Hiley Addington, dated April 22d, that Lord Sidmouth "left the house at seven that morning, much gratified with the debate and the division. Lords Grey and Grenville," he proceeded, "spoke very ably, but I think too despondingly, of the cause of Spain. The argument on one side was far more preponderant than the numbers on the other. The attempts to account for the movement from Lisbon to the north, and for the want of cavalry, completely failed. I spoke for about an hour, not having risen till one o'clock. * * * Moore was adverted to by government in terms of cold disfavour, which, however, were more than counterbalanced by the justice he met with from other quarters. The House was uncommonly full. F. Moore and his brother were there, and delighted with the terms in which Sir J. Moore was spoken of by some persons."

On the 12th of May in this year, Sir Arthur Wellesley, by driving Marshal Soult and his army out of Oporto, commenced that brilliant career on the Peninsula which, under Providence, so largely contributed to alter the destinies of Europe. Early in the preceding month also, Austria, encouraged probably by the state of affairs in Spain and Portugal, had rashly commenced another of those tremendous struggles (the fourth since the commencement of the French revolution) which tended only to prove her indo-

warfare will perhaps soon become necessary in Spain, which, with union and constancy on the part of the people, will, I am persuaded, wear out all military means of subjugation; but if discord, 'sævior armis,' gains a footing, the consequences must be fatal."

mitable spirit, and her inability to cope single-handed with the gigantic power of France. But as Lord Sidmouth took no part in the foreign transactions of the period, it is only necessary to observe here, that his Lordship's correspondence expressed an earnest desire that the struggle should be vigorously and perseveringly carried on in Spain, and strongly disapproved of the expedition to the Scheldt, which he characterised as "vis consilii expers."

At the commencement of the year 1809, the relations of Great Britain with the United States of America had assumed a very threatening attitude, in consequence of the injury which the British orders in council, issued by the advice of the present government in 1807, had inflicted on the commerce of that republic. The attempt to enforce those orders being regarded by the Americans as an infringement of their neutral rights, had already led to a hostile collision between cruisers of the two powers, and consequences still more unfortunate were to be apprehended from an act of embargo passed by Congress, interdicting commercial intercourse both with England and France. Lord Sidmouth, who was fully impressed, both with the injustice and impolicy of the orders in council*, was extremely anxious that the government

* In a letter addressed a few months afterwards to his brother, his Lordship expressed himself respecting these orders in the following terms:—

"Of that destructive system all are weary, 'præter atrocem animum Catonis.' On our part the senseless project of bringing France to reason by privation, has long been, in effect, abandoned, and British manufactures and colonial produce find their way, by means of licences granted by our government (the authors of the orders in council), to every part of the Continent."

should pursue a more conciliatory policy towards the United States by accepting an offer made by the American minister in August, 1808, proposing that "if the orders in council should be repealed as far as regarded the United States, the embargo imposed in the said States should be removed as far as regarded his Majesty's dominions." When, therefore, Lord Grenville moved a direct proposition to that effect on the 17th of February, Lord Sidmouth warmly supported the motion, although, as he observed, "he could not concur in all the opinions which his noble friend had expressed." Lord Sidmouth made a very able speech on this occasion, which he subsequently published, and in which he strongly enforced the propriety of strictly observing, in our conduct towards neutral states, the true and established principles of public law. Those principles he stated to be,—"1st, that neutrals have a right to carry on, during war, their accustomed trade, without any other molestation or hinderance than such as arises from search and blockade; 2dly, that this right of neutrals is sacred, and cannot be forfeited but by their own wrong; 3dly, that neutrals have not a right to carry on, during war, a trade which they have never possessed, and which they hold by no title of use or habit during peace. All these principles," his Lordship observed, "were violated or compromised by the orders in council of the month of November, 1807."

But as interest no longer attaches to this question, it is needless to pursue it further. It appears, however, from the following letter to his brother, dated April the 3d, that his Lordship's sentiments were highly gratifying to the American minister, Mr. Pink-

ney; whilst it may be inferred from the settlement of the question almost immediately afterwards, that they were not without their effect upon his Majesty's government: — "I dined on Tuesday at Lord Erskine's. Mr. Pinkney was of the party. He told me that he concurred in all that I had said on Lord Grenville's motion, having been present at the debate; and that on my view of the subject an accommodation might instantly take place. This, I own, was more than I expected, and is a proof that the American government is more sober-minded and reasonable than most people imagine. Our government, I think, has altered its tone."

It is now necessary to notice two other subjects towards which Lord Sidmouth particularly directed his attention during the present session, which terminated on the 21st of June.

The first of these he submitted to the consideration of parliament on the 2d of that month, by moving for "a return of the number of licences issued within a certain period, under the Toleration Act." The object of his motion was to direct the attention of the legislature, with a view to some future remedial enactment, to the evils resulting from the facility with which self-appointed teachers, though not attached to particular congregations, and without exhibiting proof either of good conduct or fitness, were enabled to procure licences to preach. This he explained to the House in the able and judicious speech with which he introduced the subject; but as he again brought it forward two years afterwards in the shape of a substantive proposition, which, from the interest it excited, will require particular notice, it is only

necessary to observe here, that the present motion was received by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Harrowby, and all the other speakers, with marked approbation. Nor was this feeling by any means confined within the walls of parliament, for only a few days afterwards Lord Sidmouth informed his brother, that his "agitation of the question concerning licences had brought him a great number of letters — some from Dissenters — all suggesting or urging regulations."

A second occasion, on which his Lordship took a prominent part in debate, was upon the third reading of the bill for "pledging one million of the war taxes to defray the interest of the loan," which he justly regarded as "a diversion of the war taxes from the objects for which they were originally granted by parliament," and "a departure from the system of financial policy adopted by parliament at the renewal of the war, which must prove highly injurious to the future prospects of the country." * As the system above alluded to was his own, had received general approbation, and had hitherto fulfilled its purpose even beyond expectation, he was naturally disappointed at seeing it departed from. His own "proposition to parliament had been to raise so large a sum within the year, by extraordinary war taxes, as to confine the increase of the public debt within very narrow limits, if not wholly to prevent it." † This was now reversed,

* His Lordship's printed speech, p. 4.

† Mr. Vansittart's statement, June 20th, 1809, on presenting his "finance resolutions," which able document will afford much valuable information to the reader who may desire to look more closely into this subject. Preserved with the papers relating to

and the very sums provided for its accomplishment were to be applied to a different purpose. He, therefore, not only spoke in condemnation of the bill, but entered a protest against it, which was signed also by Lord Grenville and other Peers: —

In his speech on the occasion, which he printed for private circulation, after lamenting the enormous increase of expenditure during the past and present years, his Lordship observed that "he had endeavoured, in the years 1803 and 1804, to adapt our expenditure, and the system by which it was to be provided for, to a war of unusual duration. The former, though complained of at the time as too restricted, had been found fully sufficient for complete security; and the latter, which was intended to prevent, by means of the sinking fund and of war taxes to an unexampled amount, any large addition to the national debt or permanent taxes, was effected by the firmness of parliament seconded by the fortitude of the people. Twelve millions of war taxes were imposed, although an addition of near 100,000,000*l.* to the public debt, and of near 5,000,000*l.* to the permanent taxes, had been made in 1802, for the purpose of redeeming the income tax from mortgage, and winding up the expenses of the war. In proof of the success of this system, a loan of ten millions was found sufficient to liquidate the whole expense of the first year of war, and yet leave a surplus of two millions. In the subsequent year (1804) the loan was still for ten millions; but, as the expenses had necessarily increased, one million was added to the war taxes — a measure exactly the reverse of that now under consideration. The great object which he then had in view, was to arrive at the point where the sum borrowed would be balanced by the sum to be redeemed in the same year; after which, if there was no additional expenditure, the public service would be carried on with a diminishing debt. Thus would the important

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the financial discussions of this session, there has been found an able paper on the "sinking fund," in the handwriting of the Rev. Dr. Beeke, which the reader will find in the Appendix.

object be accomplished, of maintaining this great contest with little or no addition to the future burdens of the public.

"The attainment, however, to this impregnable position of financial security, had been unfortunately retarded by the increased expenditure of more recent periods. The loan for 1805 was twenty millions instead of ten, to meet which $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was added to the war tax on property, which produced about 1,200,000*l.* This proved so inadequate to the increased expenditure, that Lords Grenville and H. Petty, in 1806, added 6,000,000*l.* to the war taxes. According to their plan, which was the best of which circumstances admitted, the extraordinary expenditure being estimated at thirty-two millions, the war taxes, which were computed at twenty-one millions, were to supply not only the interest of the loan requisite to supply the deficiency, but also a sinking fund for the redemption of that loan, the whole amount of which was to be liquidated in fourteen years. This plan comprised principles of which the project of the present year was entirely destitute, namely, those of redemption, renovation, and permanency: it was founded on a correct view of the nature of the existing contest, as it derived from the concurrent aid of the sinking fund and the war taxes the means of continuing it for an indefinite period without any permanent increase of debt. * * *

"Some of their Lordships," Lord Sidmouth proceeded, "might not, perhaps, be fully aware of the advantages resulting from the system which was now, for the first time, invaded. But the war taxes had not only produced facilities in all money transactions, but they had also, since the renewal of the war, upon the lowest computation, prevented an addition of more than two hundred millions of debt, and of near ten millions of future permanent taxes. This was the system in which a breach had now been improvidently made: he trusted it would be repaired, or, at least, that it would not be repeated. He desired to see economy go hand in hand with vigour, and our income and expenditure brought as nearly as possible to a level with each other."

This energetic stand against the first attempt since the death of its author to invade the principle of Mr.

Pitt's grand measure, the sinking fund, occupied at the time a considerable portion of Lord Sidmouth's correspondence. Writing to his brother on the 12th of June, he observed: "The finance discussion went off tolerably well; better in the opinion of others than of myself. If you have seen my protest, pray tell me what you think of it. The weakness and injurious tendency of the measure to which it applies are admitted by many members of the government."

The speech was much approved of by Lord Sidmouth's correspondents, especially by Mr. Lefevre, who requested, "in order that the country might know who was its best friend, that it should be reprinted and more widely distributed."

APPENDIX

TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

FINANCIAL PAPER BY DR. BEEKE, D.D.

ALTHOUGH, individually, I must continue to disapprove, as I always have done, every departure from the principle that the *permanent* income of the nation ought to be always increased in a full proportion to any increase of permanent expenditure, and, consequently, that whenever there is an increase of the funded debt there ought to be a concurrent increase of revenue to pay the charge occasioned by it, yet since Mr. Pitt first set the example of pawning the income tax, and Lord Grenville adopted the still more dangerous measure of *appropriating* an assignment on the present temporary taxes to the redeeming fund, I cannot be surprised that Mr. Perceval has taken advantage of these precedents. Indeed the present internal situation of the country is some excuse for avoiding any new taxes at present. The advantage of postponing the day when new burdens must be laid on the people is immediate, specious, and ministerial; the evil may be remote, is not distinctly within the view of superficial observers, and it may fall on a future and perhaps hostile administration to encounter it. Mr. Pitt and his successor in office practically felt the great inconvenience which resulted from having *pawned* the income tax; but my objections to Lord Grenville's plan were not limited to the circumstance in which it resembled the temporary expedient adopted by Mr. Pitt (which might be defended in times of great difficulty), but they were against the false theories of finance which were interwoven with his system, and the arithmetical *charlatanerie* of its construction.

When it is known that a large proportion of the revenue now raised by nominally temporary taxes must, by some means or other, be obtained to support any safe establishment during peace, and when it is also considered that an important part of those taxes cannot be prudently levied after that event, surely these are reasons why we should be very cautious how we pledge any portion of such a revenue, and, still more, why we should not pledge more than may be positively necessary.

If, under all circumstances, it may be advisable to fund the debt of the present year on their credit, yet why adopt the fallacy of *appropriating* any part of them to the redemption of a debt so funded? Any redemption of debt, while its amount is really increasing, is essentially the same as the dangerous and too often ruinous plan of drawing and redrawing in private concerns. The money-merchants and stock-brokers are considerable gainers, indeed, by it, and may invent some showy reasons why it is *in itself* a public benefit, of which none is more demonstrably fallacious than that it contributes to public credit by supporting the price of the funds.

But although the system of *borrowing* to *redeem* is in itself of a ruinous tendency, yet, as adopted by Mr. Pitt, it was connected with most important advantages which greatly outweighed the evil that otherwise might have resulted from it. The *essence* of his original plan was first of all to provide a *real* basis for the permanent debt, producing a revenue at least adequate to pay its interest, and then to provide an *efficient* fund for the gradual redemption of the principal. *He* never thought of beginning or of augmenting a fund for the redemption of debt by borrowing the very money employed to redeem; and, from circumstances, I am convinced that he would have received a proposition to do it with no small surprise.

When Mr. Pitt first established the redeeming fund, the political circumstances of Europe promised a long period of tranquillity, and the increase of national wealth, and improved productiveness of the existing public revenue, which are the natural consequences of it. *He* did not, however, in any

degree, build on expectations however reasonable; but *at once*, by increased taxation, created an adequate income, adopting it as a principle, that only a surplus of revenue can really extinguish debt. At the same time, also, he very wisely provided against the mischief of too rapidly furnishing the private money-market, by limiting the increase of his fund to four millions a-year.

In conformity with the same principles of finance, when a necessity returned of increasing the permanent debt, his first care was to establish an adequate *increase* of revenue, sufficient not only to defray the interest, but also to redeem the principal money borrowed, within a period which might be calculated with some degree of correctness. The debt of each year, also, being kept distinct, that of each year would successively become extinct; so that the effects of too rapid a redemption were foreseen and obviated. During the war, Mr. Pitt always cherished the hope that it would not be of long duration; and that hope influenced his conduct in finance. He reluctantly augmented the permanent debt, suffering the floating debt to increase till it became an almost intolerable burden, operating most perniciously on the value of the stocks. Reduced to the necessity of reviving public credit, he had recourse to the income tax, the plan of which, though not calculated to obtain the greatest produce from it, yet went as far, perhaps, as in the first instance was prudent or even practicable.

The question of the probable produce of the income tax was new; the courage and the sound policy indicated in its adoption made it popular; the data for calculating its produce were not within the reach of every speculating politician; and it is not to be wondered at that the most exaggerated estimates were most favourably received.

When disappointment as to its early produce, and a scale of expenditure which it became difficult to limit, caused a new increase of debt, Mr. Pitt, rather than have recourse to his own system of improving the permanent revenue in proportion to the increase of interest on debt, and a fund for its extinction, had recourse to the expedient of *pawning* the income tax. I make use of the word *pawning*, because it was

avowedly made a pledge to be redeemed; and which Mr. Addington, with Mr. Pitt's full approbation, did redeem, after the cessation of hostilities, by substituting a permanent income, resulting from new taxes, instead of it.

But in consequence of this pawning of the income tax, although in itself a measure which will admit of excuse from the peculiar circumstances under which it was adopted, exclusive of the floating debt, an *unfunded debt* (for although incorporated with the funded debt, it was itself essentially *unfunded*) had accumulated of between fifty and sixty millions. And for this, as well as the floating debt, adequate funds were to be provided on the return of peace. These funds could only be provided by new taxes; and in order to diminish the magnitude of those taxes, recourse was had to an expedient of which you know that I could not approve, namely, the consolidation of the various redeeming funds; thereby substituting that increase of revenue resulting from annual purchases by the Commissioners which, in the original plan, was intended to have reverted to the public in lieu of an immediate increase of revenue by new taxes: and this was the first deviation from the sound principle originally adopted, and, during the early part of the war, persevered in, of limiting the extent of the sums to be thrown into the private money market by the operation of a redemption (or, as it would be when the Stocks should be above par, a *forced repayment*) of the public debt.

I never could agree to the correctness of the reasoning by which Mr. Pitt, while he acknowledged the justness of my objections to this plan of consolidating the various existing redeeming funds, would neglect the admitted consequences, because they were remote, and, when felt, might be corrected. This was neither more nor less than admitting that the magnitude of a redeeming fund must necessarily be limited, but acting, in the present moment, as if it might be swollen to an absurd magnitude; and if the former is admitted, the latter is a deception.

But, from this time, the public seems to have lost sight of all sound principles of finance as applied to the extinction of national debt, otherwise Lord Grenville's plan never could have experienced a favourable reception, nor would that part

of Mr. Perceval's plan which applies a part of the temporary taxes to redemption in lieu of new and efficient taxes for that purpose, have remained without censure.

Mr. Pitt knew, as well as any man, that *borrowing* to supply the redeeming fund is no other than a system of drawing and redrawing; and, in truth, we *do borrow* to supply the redeeming fund, when we borrow to supply the deficiency of the war-taxes caused by this appropriation of them.

But *Mr. Pitt himself* never did borrow to supply that fund. *He*, when he thought it expedient to pawn the income tax, never dreamt of applying another portion of that tax to the fund for redeeming the national debt. He well knew, that while he avoided to increase the national income, it would be only an imposition on public credulity to adopt a measure ostensibly, and only ostensibly, paying off the national debt.

The true object of the plan which he originally adopted, and which he persevered in during the greater part of his first administration, was constantly to increase the permanent revenue by about a fourth part more than the real and necessary charge on it; thus constantly increasing the national estate in a greater ratio than the increase of the incumbrances on it.

In private life, we probably should not call the man very unwise who, in order to pay a debt previously incurred, should sell an annuity of 3000*l.* per annum, at the same time adding, by a part of the same operation, 4000*l.* a year to his rental. But should we not think differently of the man who should annually sell an annuity of that amount, making no attempt to increase his rental, but annually transferring to trustees, not only such a proportion of his former revenue as may be required to pay his increased interest of his increased debt, but also to *redeem it?*

In truth, Mr. Pitt's plans and that adopted by Lord Grenville, and now with less parade by Mr. Perceval, are *essentially* different in principle and *opposite* in effect on the national income: the former calculated to increase the income more rapidly than the real and intrinsic charge on it; the latter to increase, by a system of buying and selling or funding and redeeming the debt more rapidly than it would have increased

in the natural course of things, and this without any increase of the national income.

Thinking, however, as I do, that there are demonstrable reasons why the redeeming fund ought not much to exceed between a 30th and 25th of the aggregate national income, I should feel no objection to limit its annual amount to ten millions sterling. In that case, the *surplus* beyond ten millions might fairly, and on sound principles of finance, be employed as a fund on which to borrow; always, however, appropriating an adequate proportion of it to the redemption of the debt borrowed on it.

May 27. 1809.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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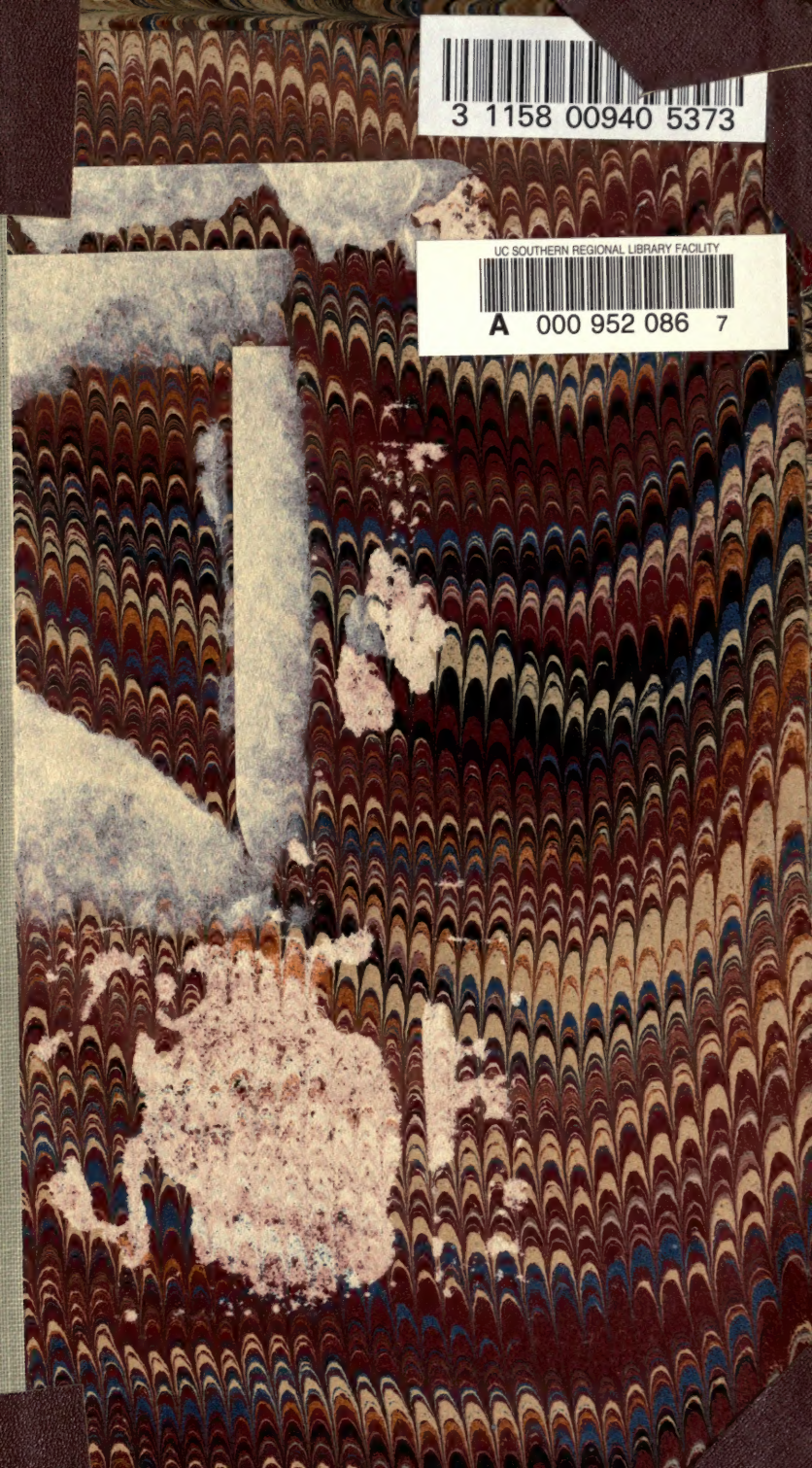
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